

Bethany College Sermons

By the Founder and Pastor

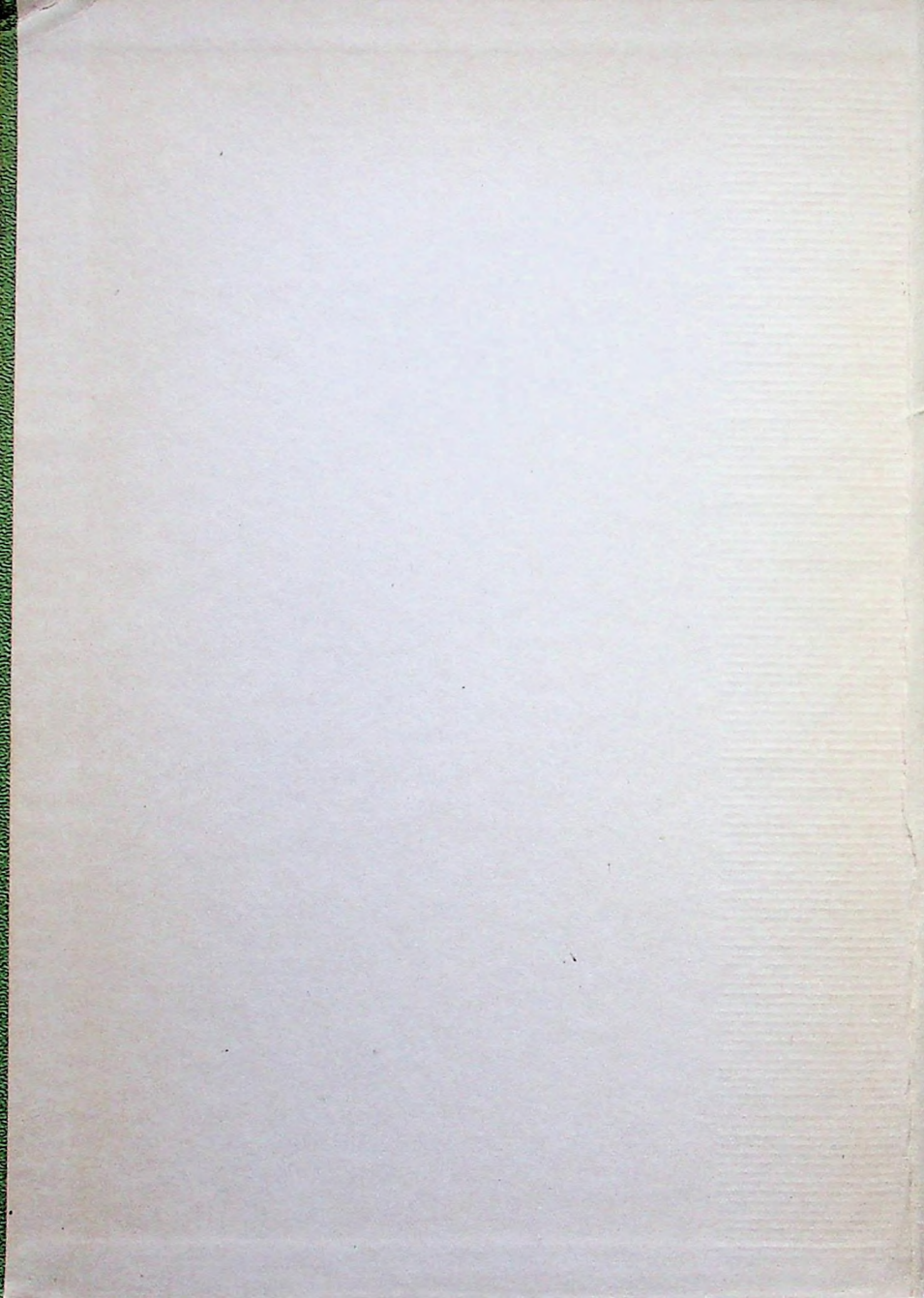
Bethany college sermons,

MAIN BX 7327 .A1 B4 1930

22615



Manhattan Christian College Library



Sub. 4 (alt)

1642

2

AN

BV
4310
C62

Bethany College Sermons

7210
E 824

By the Younger Graduates



MANHATTAN BIBLE COLLEGE LIBRARY
MANHATTAN, KANS.

THE STANDARD PUBLISHING COMPANY
CINCINNATI, OHIO

Copyrighted, 1930

The Standard Publishing Company

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
BETHANY COLLEGE (Historic Sketch)	7
Cloyd Goodnight.	
I.	
ZACCHÆUS	9
A. H. Wilson.	
II.	
CHRIST OUR HOPE.....	20
Robert S. Tuck.	
III.	
THE WORLD AND THE WAY FORWARD.....	31
H. Glenn Carpenter.	
IV.	
THE MISUNDERSTOOD CHRIST.....	44
Frank G. Helme.	
V.	
THE SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE.....	57
Arthur E. Worthy.	
VI.	
THE CHURCH AND THE CHANGING ORDER.....	71
Percy Thomas.	
VII.	
THINE ORDINANCES ARE GOOD.....	82
Lee M. Moore.	

Table of Contents

VIII.

FINDING GOD	94
Frank Donaldson.	

IX.

FAIRNESS IN PREJUDICE	107
Herman M. Patton.	

X.

ONE-WAY STREETS	123
A. F. Hanes.	

XI.

PROGRESS THROUGH THE GOSPEL	136
J. G. Hurst.	

XII.

CRUCIFYING CHRIST AFRESH	150
W. H. McKinney.	

XIII.

JESUS' WAY WITH SINNERS	162
Maurice Fogle.	

XIV.

CHRISTIANITY THE BEST WAY	172
Clifford Bucy.	

XV.

VICTORY THROUGH DEFEAT	184
Dwight E. Stevenson.	

EDITOR'S NOTE

HERETOFORE collections of sermons appearing in book form have been prepared by preachers of considerable experience.

This book, and another containing sermons by Phillips University graduates, will attract attention because both set forth the sermonic work of men who have graduated within the twelve years preceding the date of publication.

The two books are companion volumes appearing as friendly competitors for popular favor.

E. W. THORNTON.

BETHANY COLLEGE

FROM the very beginnings of his public ministry, Alexander Campbell felt that ultimately the work to which his father and himself were committed could only make the type of progress they expected with the assistance of an institution for the educating of leaders. In 1818 he began in his own home such an enterprise under the name of the Buffalo Seminary. This effort proved unsatisfactory, and was discontinued in 1823.

In 1839 Alexander Campbell announced a very pretentious educational program in which the school, the home and the church were to co-operate in the maintenance of a primary department, a college and a laboratory school for the special training of church leadership. In 1840 Bethany College was chartered for the purpose of carrying out this program. In 1841 classwork actually began. This work, however, was confined to the college feature. A little later the primary department was established, the purpose of which was to train boys in such a way as to prepare them for college entrance. This department did not continue long.

Ultimately, the college feature of Mr. Campbell's educational program became rather well defined in the activities of Bethany College; the arts and sciences, the learned and modern languages, and some philosophy, constituted the curriculum. One added feature gave Bethany a rather unique distinction. This was

Bethany College

the fact that each day the entire college came together for a one-hour lecture on the Scriptures. This lecture Mr. Campbell gave, unless he was away from the college, in which event the lecture was given either by Dr. Robert Richardson or W. K. Pendleton.

During the first twenty years of its history Bethany College prospered. Its first serious catastrophe was the destructive fire of Dec. 10, 1857. No sooner had its distinguished president and his associates developed a plan for rebuilding and begun to secure funds to carry out the same than war broke out between the North and the South. A goodly part of Bethany's support had come from the South; so the decade from 1860 to 1870 brought very, very dark days, and, in a large measure, these days continued until about 1900. In the meantime, however, some of the brightest young men of the country came to Bethany for their college training, and later, through the sheer force of their leadership in the church, in the State, in business, and in higher education, as well as the other professions, brought unusual distinction to their *alma mater*.

Bethany has ever been content to be a small college, undertaking to do a genuine type of undergraduate work. From time to time there have been those who would have had the institution branch out into much more pretentious fields, but experience and guidance of sound friends have led the institution to be modest and to undertake to be sound. Her present equipment is adequate for a high type of actual college work, and to this work the college seeks to give itself as a loyal servant to the church.

CLOYD GOODNIGHT, Pres.

BETHANY COLLEGE SERMONS

I.

ZACCHÆUS

BY A. H. WILSON.

(Luke 19: 1-10.)

AND Jesus entered and passed through Jericho." That was a great day for Jericho. It is a great day for any city or town when Jesus comes that way, and it was a no less memorable day for the citizens of Jericho. It is a great day when Jesus enters the lives of men in any community. We have seen the wholesome results of a visit from the Master on many a city and town following a successful evangelistic meeting. We have seen entrenched wickedness routed by the Master's visit. We have seen men turn from their idols and receive with joy the Guest divine. As a result of the Master's visit many lives were transformed, many homes were brightened and an entire community was lifted nearer God.

There is gladness in the thought that just as Jesus entered and passed through Jericho centuries ago, He is entering and passing through your town and mine to-day. For many He will enter and pass through without receiving an invitation to abide. For others, thank God, He will enter and tarry evermore. No

community or individual can be just the same after Jesus has passed that way.

Now, if we knew Jesus would visit our town or community in bodily presence to-morrow, would we not make hasty preparations to meet Him? If Jesus were to come to your place to-day, would there be any change in your conduct? Would there be any habits you would break? Would there be any language you would smother? Would there be any places you would not frequent? Would there be any books or magazines you would not be found reading? Would there be any pictures you'd turn to the wall or burn? Would there be any pleasures you would not indulge in? Let us not deceive ourselves. Listen to the Master Himself as to His coming: "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Matt. 24:42, 44).

Among those of Jericho who awaited with joyful expectancy the coming of the great Teacher was Zacchæus. "And, behold, there was a man named Zacchæus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature." Let us note several things about Zacchæus that commend him to us most favorably.

I. HE MADE THE MOST OF HIS OPPORTUNITY.

When Jesus came his way Zacchæus sought to see Him, to know Him. Noble ambition! Worthy desire! To "know him whom to know aright is life eternal."

Like many another man of his day, or ours, Zacchæus might have said: "Not to-day, I'm too busy;

I'll go to see and meet the Master some other time." So reasoned Felix, awaiting a more convenient season that never came. So reasons many a man to whom the Saviour has drawn nigh. Such men forget the admonition of God's word which says, "My spirit shall not always strive with man." "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart, as in the provocation."

Zacchæus might have said, like so many of us, that he could not leave his business. He might have had a social engagement that could not be postponed, for he was a man of wealth and prominence. But, whatever was on Zacchæus' program for that day, it was all swept aside by his consuming desire to see Jesus. And when we come to appreciate even partially what Christ's presence means to us and to the world, we, too, will find time to see and know Him. But we are shamed to-day by this man who took perhaps the first real opportunity he had to see and obey Jesus.

Time and again Christ's claim on our life is pressed upon us only to be repeatedly rejected. For no one can go far down the streets of the average city without meeting some reminder of Jesus. And yet many do not accept Him. He may be met on the street corner where men have built His church. He may be met in the handclasp of some noble friend. He may be met in the smiling eyes of innocent childhood. He may be met in the loving devotion of wife or sweetheart. He may be met in the glory of the sunrise, in the fragrance of the rose, in the song of the bird, in the hush of the twilight, or in anything that suggests the good, the true or the beautiful. All the finer emotions and sentiments of life are fragrant with the

spirit and presence of Christ. But, though many of us fail to see and know Him through all these experiences, Zacchæus made the most of his first opportunity.

II. ZACCHÆUS SOUGHT TO SEE JESUS "WHO HE WAS."

Had Zacchæus' desire been one of idle curiosity, it would have had little value. But he sought to see Jesus who he was. We presume there are few people in the civilized world who have not seen Jesus in one form or another. What Jesus means to us is determined very largely by what we see in Him. Some see Jesus as a myth. Some see Him as a fanatic. Some see Him as an impostor. Others see Him as just a great, good man, but not divine, and still others see Him as the "Christ, the Son of the living God." We have no desire here to go into a discussion of the deity of Jesus, but it is quite apparent that Christ's ability to minister to a needy, sinful world is dependent upon His essential relationship to God and man. Was Christ divine? Ask those who knew Him best and get their reply. Ask His constant companion, Peter, and he cries: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Ask a doubting, incredulous Thomas, and he becomes convinced and shouts: "My Lord and my God!" Ask the centurion who witnessed the crucifixion, and defiantly challenged the enemy mob with "Truly, this man was the Son of God." Ask the millions living whose hearts vibrate with the love of Jesus, and who daily experience the joy of His salvation, and they will shout, "I know that my redeemer liveth. . . . He is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through him." "And he sought to see Jesus who he was." My brother, what is Jesus to

you—a myth, a fanatic, an impostor? Then He has no message or ministry for your soul or body. Is He just a great, good man, but divine only as all men are divine? Then He can be an inspirer, but not a Saviour. Is He the Christ, the Son of the living God? Then are we become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. Ah! wise indeed was Zacchæus for desiring to know Jesus *who he was*.

“And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.” Those who walked with Jesus on the Jericho road that day are not the only ones who have obstructed a view of Christ. Tragic as it is, this is often true. We are reminded that it was one of these companions that betrayed his Lord. Another denied Him, cursing. The others of His disciples almost to a man fled from Him in the hour of His greatest need. On this day Jesus was obscured by two classes of followers, those who were really disciples and those who were merely hangers-on. It is bad enough to be obscured by hangers-on, but to be obscured or hindered by His own disciples is tragic. We can well ask ourselves the question as disciples, “Am I obscuring Christ? Am I preventing some one’s seeing Him in all His strength and saving power? Is some eager Zacchæus prevented from seeing Christ because I am in the way?” If we are reflecting the spirit and life of Christ as we should, we are not obstructing any one’s view of Him.

“Can the world see Jesus in me?
Can the world see Jesus in you?
Does your heart to Him ring true,
And your life and service too?
Can the world see Jesus in you?”

And remember, "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

III. ZACCHÆUS OVERCAME DIFFICULTIES.

Zacchæus, being small of stature, and the crowd of disciples and hangers-on being so close about Jesus, he was unable to see our Lord. Zacchæus, a busy man, had put aside his business and other engagements, and had come out to the road to see Jesus. He had gone to considerable trouble to catch a glimpse of the marvelous man of whom he had heard so much. And now it seems that his interest, his effort and his sacrifice of valuable time have all been in vain. Many a man of smaller caliber would have turned home in disgust. Not so Zacchæus. He had come to see Jesus, and see Him he would if there were any possible way to do so. He was not easily discouraged. He would not be deterred. Where there is a will there must be a way. So there was and ever is. For we read: "And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way."

And for the man to-day who really wants to see Jesus, nothing on earth can prevent. Friends and relatives, habits and customs, stripes and imprisonments, these all can not prevail. For with every group of difficulties God provides a sycamore-tree by means of which to surmount them. But man must be willing to seek God's providence, instead of weakly accepting defeat at the first sign of difficulty.

While in college I became acquainted with a Jewish ministerial student. He had been reared in an orthodox Jewish home. But, having come into a knowledge of Christ, he determined to accept Christ and surren-

der his former faith. His parents remonstrated, then threatened, then reviled, and, as he made the great decision undeterred by their attitude, they completely disinherited and ostracized him. He suffered business reverses because of his decision, and finally sought refuge in America. At tremendous sacrifice and by severest toil he was, when I knew him, preparing to preach the message of his blessed Redeemer, and was rejoicing that he was counted worthy to suffer for Christ.

And yet we find men who fear to step out for Jesus—men who ought to be ashamed not to acknowledge Him. But if a man is willing to come to Christ, and is eager to come, all the forces of hell can not prevent. Brother, there is a sycamore-tree for every one who would see Jesus. But faith must lead you to see it. Desire must boost you up to it. And repentance must bring you down from it to confess and obey your Christ and Lord. Never in the world will indifference help you to climb to a point of vision where you can see Jesus.

Zacchaeus might have said, "What chance have I, a man of small stature, of seeing Jesus through such a crowd as that? I'm through!" And with that he might have quit his quest. But if he was small in stature, he was great in soul. And the soul is the true measure of a man. It is said that Watts, the great crippled poet, proposed to a girl whom he loved very dearly. But the girl cruelly replied: "When I marry, I'll marry a real man!" To which Watts quickly replied:

"Though I could reach from pole to pole,
And grasp the earth within my hand,
I must be measured by my soul—
The soul's the measure of a man."

The world delights to honor men who, like Zacchæus and Watts, make their obstacles but stepping-stones to larger achievements, and who, by mastering their difficulties, turn their trials into glorious triumphs.

And not only does the world honor those who through patience persist; God also honors them. "And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up . . ." Zacchæus, perched up there on his limb, waits breathlessly for the Master to pass under the tree. He can hear the crowd talking. The foremost ones of the throng are now passing beneath him. He catches his first glimpse of Christ, the central figure. Oh, blessed moment! Will He look up? Will He see this eager, anxious, waiting man who already feels the power of the divine personality? And then, as Jesus passes directly beneath the tree, He pauses and looks up. That look repays Zacchæus a thousand-fold for his trouble. He has won the favorable attention of the Messiah. And what Zacchæus then learned, we need to learn, that our business is to do our best and leave the results with God. God always rewards our sincere efforts. No man ever went out of his way to see or honor or serve the Son of God, without being rewarded. No humble, fearful, faltering sinner ever sought to draw near to Jesus who was not met by a smile of loving assurance and a word of welcome: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

IV. ZACCHÆUS GLADLY YIELDS TO JESUS' DEMANDS.

While that gracious face was still upturned, starting words fell upon the ears of the man in the tree. "Zacchæus, make haste, and come down; for to-day I

must abide at thy house." Jesus wanted to be entertained in Zacchæus' house, and in his heart. So He does in your house and heart. Have you thrown wide the door of your heart to Him? How Jesus transforms hearts and homes into which He comes! He visits a gypsy boy in his tent, fills his heart with the gospel message, and this lad grown to manhood rocks two continents with his evangelism. He takes a John B. Gough out of the saloon, and a "Billy" Sunday off the baseball diamond, and makes them mighty heralds of His salvation. He enters a heart and a home and straightway burdens are lifted, thoughts are cleansed, motives are changed, and a joyous new life rises out of the ashes of a wasted past. Yes, my brother, Jesus is saying to you, "Make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house."

Do we note the time element in Jesus' request? "To-day." Not to-morrow, not next week, not at some more convenient season, not during the next revival meeting, but *now*, *to-day*, this very hour, "I must abide at thy house." Does Jesus mean it is now or never? Possibly. It has often happened so. Many a man has been on the threshold of the kingdom, only to turn back into sin. Many a time Christ has seen the heart's door open, only to close again before He could gain an entrance. How exactly Paul utters this warning when he says, "Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." "To-day I must abide at thy house." But remember Jesus is no house-breaker. He will not force an entrance to your heart or home. He says: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in." That is Jesus' proposition.

Now, to this proposition Zacchæus yielded with alacrity. "And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully." Zacchæus made haste to receive Jesus. The door of his heart was flung wide. It was flung wide "to-day," it was flung wide with "haste," it was flung wide "joyfully." How different from what usually occurs! Many men hear a thousand sermons and yet refuse to receive Jesus. I can see Zacchæus as he throws himself against the main trunk of that slippery, old sycamore and slides to the ground like lightning. It was a case of love at first sight. To see Jesus was to love Him. And to love Him always means to obey Him, for, "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments." Many claim to love Christ, but refuse to obey Him. A young man delights to please the wishes of his fiancée. Why? Because he loves her. And when men look into Jesus' wonderful eyes and learn to love Him, they, too, gladly and quickly will do what He wishes.

Will we, like Zacchæus, make haste and come down and receive Him joyfully, or will we seek to evade Christ? Whether we receive Christ or reject Him, whether we invite Him or seek to flee from His presence, we must all come face to face sooner or later with the inescapable, the inevitable Christ.

The story has come down to us from the early centuries that when the storm of persecution broke over the Christian church in Rome, the little company of believers besought Peter to seek refuge in flight. His sense, both of loyalty and of honor, rose up in protest. But his friends pleaded that their deaths would be only the loss of a few sheep of the fold, his would be the loss of the shepherd. He set out by night along

Zacchaeus

the Appian highway. But as he traveled a vision flashed upon him of a figure clothed in white and a face crowned with thorns. "*Quo vadis, Domine?*" "Whither goest Thou, Lord?" Peter cried to the Christ. The Master answered, "To Rome to be crucified again instead of thee."

"Into the night the vision ebbed like breath,
And Peter turned and rushed to Rome and death."

That is a parable of the inevitable Christ, Whether we seek Him or not, whether we are in the way of obedience or out of it, the vision of Christ shall meet us face to face.

"And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully." Brother, have you done, or will you do, likewise and permit Him to create in you a new heart and build for you a sweeter, happier home?

II.

CHRIST OUR HOPE

BY ROBERT S. TUCK.

Scripture Lesson—Mark 5: 1-20.

FOR God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life." This is called the "Golden Text" of the Bible. How truly and beautifully it has been named. It is the glowing gem of truth encased in the priceless setting of divine revelation. It contains the quintessence of the superior teaching of the religion of Christ. It comprises God's truth, God's love and God's forgiveness. It includes all of the Christian's hope through God's promises. It is the brilliant jewel, the "Golden Text." It is *the* gospel.

It is truth because it is based upon divine law, and must, therefore, work out its purpose in the lives of men and nations. As you look into the splendor of God's firmament and realize the magnitude of His greatness in bringing order out of chaos, so you can look into the progress and decline, the rise and fall of men and nations and realize His greatness in sending His Son, Jesus Christ, who offers the only escape from the chaos of sin. His truth assures life when accepted and brings death when rejected. Moffatt translates it: "For God loved the world so dearly that He gave up

Christ Our Hope

His only Son, so that every one who believes in Him may have eternal life, instead of perishing. God did not send His Son into the world to pass sentence on it, but to save the world by Him. He who believes in Him is not sentenced; he who will not believe is sentenced already, for having refused to believe in the name of the only Son of God."

However, as "distance lends enchantment to the view," so also closeness of view robs that which is nearest of much of its glamour. The child blessed with luxuries loses the sense of appreciation. When pleasures are showered upon us each day they become commonplace and uninviting. In the springtime we walk into the rose garden and pluck a fragrant flower. We enjoy its sweet perfume. We are thrilled by the perfect beauty of its unfolding petals. However, as summer grows and every bush is abloom in aromatic beauty, it often becomes less impressive.

It has been my good fortune to spend a great part of my life within a few miles of the mighty Niagara. I can not tell when first I glimpsed its magnificent grandeur or how often I have gazed upon its titanic sweep of water, only to find that that which thrills the pilgrim from distant shores now holds no mystic spell for me. Florence Nightingale fell upon her knees and thanked God for its greatness and beauty. It was new, beautiful and wonderfully impressive. But I, seeing it often, have lost some of the impression of its wonder. Is the same not also true of this "golden" text, this epitome of the gospel of Christ? We have been so completely surrounded by gifts that we have forgotten the Giver. We have been so enriched by the fruits of the gospel that we forget

the power. We are so civilized that we scarcely note the influence that has civilized us.

I. To bring ourselves to a proper appreciation of this truth, it is only necessary that we mark the influence of Christian forces in the world. Picture conditions as they exist, and see that in world conditions as well as individual advancement there is written the lesson that in Christ, and in Him alone, there is hope.

1. There are those who would have us believe that religion and education are strangers. On the contrary, it is ignorance and superstition that are friends. Christianity vanquishes both and enshrines intelligence. As we travel the haunts of men we are impressed with the illiteracy of those parts of the world where Christian influence has not had fullest opportunity. A comparison of nations illuminates this truth. Statistics tell us that in the great land of India only one man out of every ten can read. Other Christless nations are little better. A missionary taking an extended journey through China calls attention to the fact that, during a six weeks' journey, he saw only one man reading, and adds that he fell asleep over the book. Such situations beget superstition and cause the benighted conditions of these lands.

These two illustrations touch but a small portion of unchristian humanity. How different are the conditions described from those under which you and I live! America, with its great educational system, secondary schools, colleges and universities, presents quite a contrast. Follow the progressive movements of the leading minds of a civilized world—the marvelous gift of inquisitive science and the advancing achievements of an enlightened world. You will find back of it all the

Christ Our Hope

"uplifting power" of Christian ideals. Well did Washington say, "The future hope of America depends upon the religious education of her children."

2. As you continue contrasting and comparing conditions, you find also the arresting story of world poverty. You contemplate a picture of the starving multitudes of the earth's poor. In one nation forty-five million of its inhabitants are existing on one meal per day. It is not an uncommon sight to see these perishing human beings fighting over the possession of a dead cat that from its meat they may appease the dreadful pangs of hunger. Contrast this with our land of plenty. Here the discarded waste of the nation's kitchen table would feed the starving multitudes of the rest of the world. Note the striking contrast between famishing India and China and feasting Christian America. Picture the rosy-cheeked youngster at your table as he crows over his cup of pasteurized milk in contrast with the undernourished infant lying under the scorching heat of a tropical sun. In all conditions where human happiness has been enhanced you will see the story of this "Golden Text."

Note also the economic condition of the world. While we are contending for more pay and shorter hours, the Chinese coolie is working from early dawn until late dusk for three cents. While our mothers and wives await our return from an eight-hour day, our cousin's mother across the sea is working eleven hours for eleven cents a day. In America there is a controversy between mine operator and miner as to a living wage. At the same time the fellow-miner across the earth is laboring for seven cents per day, and he never sees the sun on a working-day. In some coun-

tries, suicide is considered the best way out, but if it costs ten cents, it is considered too much of a luxury.

Well does Roger Babson include this paragraph in one of his books: "One of the most interesting residents of Washington is Mr. John Hays Hammond. Those who have had the pleasure of sitting with him on his veranda, listening to the experiences and investigations of America's greatest mining engineer, have learned to love and respect him. Whatever subject of conversation one starts, it eventually ends by his talking about Africa. He tells of the wonderfully developed water powers, tremendous forests and rich gold deposits. He describes the almost unbelievable additional natural resources of that continent. His guest will sometimes ask, 'Why is it that Africa does not amount to more?' To this he answers, 'Why is it? It is because Africa is the Dark Continent.' " Three engineers who had had experiences in Russia gave the same writer reasons for some of the labor conditions in that land. They said: "The real reason is that Russian leaders have lost their faith in God." Babson adds: "It is upon these religious qualities that prosperity absolutely depends." In world conditions there is an unending illustration of the truth John wrote in the beginning of his memoirs of the Christ.

3. We should not neglect to have a picture of glorious Christian womanhood contrasted with the degraded womanhood of the world. Let us remember that India thinks a woman ranks with the donkey. The Hindu believes that the cow is sacred, but that a woman is an unclean animal. The Hindu asks the question, "What is the door to hell?" and the answer is, "A woman." The women of the dark lands of the

world are the beasts of burden and suffer from man's cruel injustice. Christian America paints the beautiful picture of exalted, loved and admired womanhood. Critical though we may be of woman's real sphere, we must agree that she has achieved a lofty place in every realm of American life. She has been placed there by the influence of Christian ideals. Civilization, you say? Surely civilization, but the ideals of the Man of Galilee and civilization in its highest sense are the same.

Ruskin says: "The buckling on of the knight's armor by his lady's hand was not a mere caprice of romantic fashion. It is the type of an eternal truth that the soul's armor is never well set unless a woman's hand has braced it, and it is only when she braces it loosely that the honor of manhood fails." Herrick Johnson climaxes the truth by saying: "Christianity has lifted woman to a new place in the world. And just in proportion as Christianity has sway will she rise to a higher dignity in life. What she has now and all she shall have of privileges and honor, she owes to that gospel which took those qualities which had been counted weak and unworthy, and gave them a divine glory in Christ."

II. Science also has its story to tell. Osgood says that "the people of China are unspeakably dirty." Another has said that "the people of Africa receive a bath only when it rains." Filth breeds germs. Germs breed disease. Disease breeds death. The result is that the death-rate is high. Millions in these lands die in the first year of life. The average age in many lands is twenty years. Listen to the men who have felt the pulse of China, Africa or India, and contrast their statements with scientific America. Here the

death-rate is low and the average age is high. Let us not be a party to the false cry that true science and genuine Christianity are at variance. Christianity owes a debt to science and science owes a tremendous debt to Christianity. They should go hand in hand, elevating, civilizing and saving a world. The truth of the two fields shall rely upon each other and fulfill their purpose. The French scientist, Charles E. DeM. Sajous, has it right when he says: "The attitude of science in our day towards religion is anything but antagonistic." Science has caused us to look through the telescope and say anew: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork." Science has caused us to peer through the microscope and see the marvelous work of the Creator in the abounding creation of life. That science which has conquered yellow fever, smallpox, influenza and tuberculosis is true science. It has received its impetus from the power of gospel truth.

III. Time, space and human limitations forbid our attempting fully to prove the truth of this divine text. It would demand a contrast of the growing spirit of democracy in the world with systems that have had their day. It would necessitate an account of the rise and fall of nations according as they had or did not have Christian ideals. We recall a verse in illustration:

"That rock-crowned Athens calls our thoughts away;
There sits she, lovely in her calm decay—
The eye of Greece, Fame's daughter sad and lone,
The queen of wisdom on her moldering throne."

We shall bring our arguments to a close with thoughts from two other fields—world religions and man's immortal quest.

IV. Man is a worshiping being. He may bow in worship to an idol of wood or stone. He may adore the sun, moon or stars, or he may have found the path to the highest, the Creator of all. Whatever his station, man believes and man worships. Contrast the story of a sobbing mother offering her child in flames to the god Moloch, with the Christian mother who lulls her babe to sleep by singing sweet refrains from hymns of the faith. Contrast the priests of Baal, who torture themselves in the name of their god, with the Christian who has made himself happy by heeding the Master's invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." To make such a contrast is to note the triumph of love over hate, faith over fear, Christ over the world.

Also it is true that man considers himself immortal, and the thirst for immortality is universal. The age-old question of Job, "If a man die, shall he live again?" is the yearning desire of all humanity. It is the soul thirst of the race. It has been the quest of all religions. It has been the dream of all philosophy. It is the spirit of man turning to its source of light as a flower turns to the rising sun. The soul's desire is for immortality. Job's is the question of mankind, and is answered only through the One who said, "I am the resurrection and the life." Man in his highest desire can sing with Oliver Wendell Holmes:

"Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!"

The thought of immortality through Christ is the essence of life. It is life itself. Christ said: "I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly." In Him is the assurance of unending, perpetual being. The Christian knows that there is something, the ego, the I, the personality, the spirit, encased in his temple of flesh and that some day the scaffolding shall be torn down and the permanent self shall remain. It is this high thought that makes man grow, build and develop. Would not Phidias carve more aspiringly at marble than at sandstone? As one has well put it: "A man's thought of himself must always make a difference in his life, and immortality is the supreme assertion of abiding spiritual value in man." It is because Jesus came revealing the crowning truth of life, abundant and unending life, that the world is advancing, growing and achieving. It is through Christ that we have been given the victor's song, "O death, where is thy victory? O grave, where is thy sting?"

John Fiske has said: "I believe in the immortality of the soul, not in the sense in which I accept the demonstrated truths of science, but the supreme act of faith on the reasonableness of God's work." That higher and abundant life, that is swallowed up of immortality, is the victorious teaching of Christ. It moves man to reach beyond himself and "build more stately mansions." It inspires the poet, the artist, the singer, the artisan. It is the whispering answer to the yearning question of man, "If I die, will I live again?"

Cicero said: "Man's grand ideals are overtures of immortality, because they require and demand immor-

Christ Our Hope

talities for their realization." Surely Christ is our hope, for He came that we "may have life and may have it abundantly."

In one of the villages of northern India, a Mohammedan commented to a missionary: "You must admit that we have one thing that you have not, and it is better than anything you have." Upon further inquiry, he replied: "When we go to our Mecca, we find at least a coffin. When you Christians go to Jerusalem, you find nothing but an empty tomb." The missionary replied: "That is just the difference: Mohammed is dead. Mohammed is in his coffin." That is the final triumphant and hallelujah chorus of this wonderful oratorio. "He is not here, for He is risen." "Because I live, ye shall live also." It is the unending victory of the power of Christ over death—the last enemy He shall put under His feet.

In conclusion, turn to the fifth chapter of Mark and read the first twenty verses. Here is the grievous picture of the demon-possessed man, living in the tombs near the Sea of Galilee. So demon-possessed was he that he could not be bound with fetter or chain. The unclean spirit said, "My name is Legion; for we are many." Then through Christ there came a change. The man was made free. The news spread to the city and the curious came to see what had taken place. "And they come to Jesus, and behold him that was possessed with demons sitting, clothed and in his right mind." That is the story of Christ's contribution to the world. Christian humanity in every sense is sitting clothed and in its right mind because "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." There remains for us the fur-

Bethany College Sermons

ther admonition from the same story: "And as he was entering into the boat, he that had been possessed with demons besought him that he might be with him. And he suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go to thy house unto thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and how he had mercy on thee."

III.

THE WORLD AND THE WAY FORWARD*

BY H. GLENN CARPENTER.

"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."—Matt. 7: 12.

WHAT a wonderful world we live in to-day! The constant state of development of the means of communication and transportation almost leaves us in a state of bewilderment. We witness, it would seem, the culmination of the ingenuity of mankind. Amazing growth and advancement are noted in all lines of human endeavor. The application of man's ingenuity to means of travel is making the world smaller every day. Radio broadcasting is one of the marvels of the age. We communicate with the ends of the earth with astonishing ease. Coupled with the modern age of communication is the rapid dissemination of news which keeps the peoples of the world in constant touch with one another. The application of steam and electricity to means of travel has revolutionized transportation. Inventions, almost without number, make living conditions vastly superior to those of our forefathers.

Yet, in spite of this recognized development, we find a spirit of unrest and agitation prevalent to-day.

*The theme of this sermon was the slogan of the International Convention of Disciples of Christ held in Columbus, O., Apr. 17-22, 1928.

Men are finding that all is not well. Things are not as they should be with all this record of advancement. Our great dailies bring to us the spectacle of constant strife between employer and employee, together with records of strikes and lockouts, evictions, retaliations and the like. Politically, we find that the people are dissatisfied with their governments. Dictators appear and uprisings take place in the Old World, and we find that men may be corrupted with money in this country. In the social world we see race antagonisms and static gradations of social orders. In the world of nations we see suspicion and hatred, and in the religious world we see distrust and sectarian warfare rampant. Truly what an astounding world we are living in to-day! In view of this deplorable situation peoples are sending up their almost despairing cry, "What is the way forward?"

I.

The development of the industrial situation is interesting. In the beginning each man was his own employer. He owned his own tools and he tilled his own ground. He made his own conditions of labor and realized the fruit thereof in proportion to his own energy and perseverance. It gradually came about that those who were better fitted for one task were set aside for that, and there took place the beginnings of the trades. The introduction of steam, the invention of machinery and the beginning of the factory system marked another forward step in the industrial history of the world. A radical factor now entered into the situation. No longer was the workman his own master. No longer did he use his own tools. He was

The World and the Way Forward

now an employee of another, and his hours and conditions of working were laid out for him. He had lost his independence. From then until now we have been witnessing almost constant strife between the employer and his employee, between master and workman, between capital and labor. The employer, by virtue of his position, becomes the controlling factor in capital, and hence is able to use the great power of capital in dealing with his workmen. To-day the cry goes up from the world for the way forward in this economic and industrial tangle!

As man was practically independent industrially in the early days, so was he practically self-governing. The law of self-preservation lay at the bottom of his little political philosophy. With the growth of the family, clan and larger groups, he saw his elemental liberty becoming abridged. He saw that he had a duty to his neighbor as well as to himself. The battle which mankind has waged toward republican forms of government is easily seen. Autoeratic governments and "the divine right of kings" professedly have gone. All should be well to-day, but it is not so! In Italy we see the dictatorship of Mussolini. In Russia we see the struggle still going on to find a sane basis of government. In England we see the strife between the Labor party and the Conservative *regime*. Nor is all well in America. Here we see a republic standing for over one hundred and fifty years, backed by a strong Constitution and a united people. But here, also, we note dissatisfaction and constant agitation concerning the political condition of the nation. Here we see men corrupted by the use of money, we see questionable means used to elect men to office, we

see secret orders intimidating public officials, and find that sovereign States have had to lodge their servants behind the bars for misconduct in office. The world wants to know the way forward in the political turmoil of the day!

The social world of to-day presents a very challenging problem. In the Book of Genesis we find that "God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him." In the beginning God made no differences among men. To-day, instead of every man being upon an equality with his brother, we find the plan frustrated by the designs of men themselves. The races of the world now have little in common. Some hold themselves as superior to others and attempt to keep the others in subjection. In America we are the heirs of a social problem visited upon us by our forefathers. The negro was brought to our shores by the white race and placed in a condition of slavery. The mere fact of his freedom to-day does not relieve us of our responsibility with regard to him. Whether we will it or not, the negro of the United States is the white man's burden!

How are we living up to our responsibility? Through the press we note the lynchings, mob violence, sham trials and other forms of racial outlawry. We see the frustration of justice in the matter of negro education and suffrage. We have also the Mexican, the Japanese, the American Indian and other races with us. Each presents special problems. This intermingling of races brings about an acute social situation. Nor is the racial problem our only social difficulty. We have builded strata or gradations of society among ourselves which do not tend to create a spirit of good

The World and the Way Forward

will. Wealth, position and culture tend to divide us into different groups having little connection. These maladjustments of race and class tend to create a condition which is rapidly becoming more alarming. There is a distinct need to-day for a fresh consideration of the social situation and for practical suggestions for the bringing in of a new day in society.

Our young men who took part in the World War did so with the understanding that they were prosecuting a "war to end war." People generally felt that the late war would be the last, and that nations would learn the folly of attempting to settle their difficulties with the bayonet. The history of the world has been the rise of nations upon the ruins of other nations. It has been so since one tribe found that it could triumph over and subjugate another tribe. In the past century we saw the welding together of the great nations of Europe by force—the German Empire prior to the late war, the British Empire and the French nation. The whole world seems to have been built upon the foundation of force. Suspicion has been prevalent among the great nations, with respect to naval and military supremacy. Jealousy has existed with regard to trade concessions throughout the world. Protective tariffs and discriminations in the matter of the exclusion of nationals have served only to intensify distrust and animosity. Since the World War, at least until 1929, we have seen the retention of the war spirit instead of the inculcation of the spirit of peace and good will. A very great need of the world still is the proper solution of the international difficulties.

Nor are the problems confined to the secular aspects of human endeavor. In the field of religion we recog-

nize the same dissatisfaction and unrest. We are confronted with a multiplicity of religious bodies. In the United States alone there are over one hundred different communions. We see the overlapping of effort among religious bodies of almost identical faith, thus bringing about a useless expenditure of wealth and workers. These great bodies have been built around principles of great leaders of religious thought—Luther, Calvin, the Wesleys and others—who had great ideals. Their followers fashioned their beliefs into creeds and dogmas to which they required submission. The propagation of these principles brought new communions into being. Many of these are almost identical in government and polity, and should be united.

Yet the indications are that more division, instead of less, may be the portion of the future, in spite of some seemingly successful gestures toward union. The principles referred to were essentially worthy in themselves. The tragedy came about when these ideals and principles became the means of dividing the church of Christ into groups, destroying the solidarity of the apostolic church. To-day the average layman, who is not familiar with the thought behind the various movements, may be pardoned for asking, "What *can* a man believe?" It is indeed the potent query of the hour. Hence the cry goes up from the world: "What is the way forward in the religious perplexities of the day?"

II.

During the World War the story was circulated that men in the trenches had seen the figure of the Christ upon the clouds above the battlefields. Whether or not the "White Comrade" was imaginary, the fact remains

The World and the Way Forward

that the Master must have looked down with sorrow upon the spectacle of brother slaying brother! How must He feel to-day as He looks down into our maelstrom of cross-purposes manifest in much of our human endeavor? The cry comes ringing from the world to the Master, "Point the way forward!"

From many unexpected sources we are hearing to-day of a common solution for all of our problems and difficulties. More and more people are coming to the conclusion that the simple principles of Jesus of Nazareth are sufficient, and alone sufficient, to cure all the ills of the world provided they are given a fair opportunity. It has taken the world almost nineteen hundred years to come to this conclusion, but the hour is at hand when men are ready at last to sit at the feet of Jesus and learn His way! When He walked upon the earth and mingled with men, Jesus gave voice to important truths with respect to human relationships. He did not establish institutions for the amelioration of the conditions of His day, but He did lay down definite principles whereby those conditions could be changed for the better.

The principles which Jesus enunciated during His ministry seem to find their best expression in the declaration to His followers in the Sermon on the Mount. Taking the multitude with Him, He went into the mountain and there gave them the Beatitudes, followed by His wonderful interpretation and exemplification of the law. Then follows the model prayer which He bequeathed to His disciples as a guide to their devotions. He continues with a short discourse on judgment with the principle which sums up Christ's ideal with respect to human relationships. "Therefore," He

says to the multitude, "all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." It is the fair and impartial application of this principle to the ills of the world which would bring peace and harmony out of the chaos and confusion of the present hour. It is no wonder that at the close of this Sermon on the Mount "the people were astonished at his doctrine; for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes."

We hear a great deal these days about the "Golden Rule in industry." The question is often asked, "Will it function, will it work?" There was a time when the very thought of actually applying the principles of Jesus to practical industrial conditions was considered absurd. But we lately have been seeing them put into practice. The passing of Arthur "Golden Rule" Nash, of Cincinnati, removed from the industrial world a modern leader in the application of Jesus' principles to practical industrial conditions. Mr. Nash took his employees into partnership with himself, giving them a share in the actual ownership of the company and in the profits, and as a result the firm grew from an unimportant clothing concern to one of the leaders in that industry.

We are seeing the application of the Golden Rule elsewhere in industry to-day. Industrial insurance taken out by employers for their employees is a new development. Attention to safety and the invention and installation of safety devices point the way for a new day in the industrial world. The eight-hour day is becoming standard. The employer is feeling a responsibility toward his employee which has nothing to do with the profits of his concern. The spirit of

The World and the Way Forward

Christ is working. Upon the part of the employee there is a growing consciousness of his duty with respect to his employer. An honest wage should command honest labor. The application of the Golden Rule should work both ways. Given an honest opportunity, the principles of Jesus will work in industry to the benefit of both the employer and the employee.

After the passing of the Eighteenth Amendment, much was said and written about lax law enforcement. Increasingly officials were accused of wrong-doing. Much of the responsibility for the ensuing bad state of affairs was due to the general apathy of the public. It is refreshing to find that public sentiment is getting behind law enforcement. In the city of Pittsburgh there was held a testimonial banquet in honor of Commander John D. Pennington, Federal Prohibition Administrator of that district. Men representing various activities of metropolitan life gathered to pledge their support to Mr. Pennington and his aides in the administration of their enforcement duties. Who knows the beneficial effect of such an expression of public interest in the affairs of the day? Who knows how much such functions, if more generally utilized, would do to strengthen the morale of our officials? In many ways private citizens can practice the Golden Rule in relationships with public servants. Ex-Governor Vic Donahey, of Ohio, said: "Self-government is the most priceless gift of God. It means politics in which every citizen should have a part!" The duty of Christian citizens is to see that honest officials are chosen, and then apply the principles of Christ in their support.

In the early decades of the twentieth century we have been noting a decided trend toward a new attitude

with respect to the social ideals among men. We see representatives of different races and nations getting together in conference to discuss the racial situation throughout the world. A feeling of common brotherhood is coming to be more pronounced, regardless of color or racial distinction. We are beginning to realize that there is no need for the intense rivalries such as have characterized the past. Jesus at Jacob's well astonished the Samaritan woman by asking her for a drink of water. "How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." Jesus was a Jew, but He was more. He was the Son of God, and to Him all men were brothers, regardless of race or color.

The teachings of Jesus with respect to the brotherhood of man have done much to bring into existence a real spirit of tolerance and friendliness to take the place of the prevailing spirit of hatred and suspicion. In this country we are witnessing the gradual growth of a sense of responsibility toward the colored races within our borders. Great amounts of money are being expended for their education and well-being. In return we note a reciprocal feeling of good will. We are learning that only as we exert ourselves in helping our colored brother to solve his problems are we going to come closer to him and to the realization of the desire of Christ for a universal brotherhood. A new day is dawning throughout the whole social realm. We are learning that the artificial class distinctions which we have set up are detrimental to society in general, and we see a real spirit of social democracy developing throughout the world. This is largely due to the more

The World and the Way Forward

general acceptance of Christ's ideal of good will and tolerance manifested in the text. Class distinction and racial antagonism and prejudice must go when the spirit of Christ comes in!

We take hope to-day from the sincerity which is evidenced among the nations of the world in peace and disarmament conferences. Nations have sent their representatives to these gatherings hoping that some means might be found to limit war preparations, trusting that eventually we might be able to abolish all preparations for war and think in terms of peace. That we have not gone as far as we might have liked is no indication of ultimate failure. It will take years for the spirit of Christ to permeate the thinking of the nations, and it will take many more years before His ideals can be made entirely operative in international affairs. But a new day is at hand. This desire for friendship among nations will ultimately have its way in the world. It had its inception in the principle of tolerance which Christ gave to the world. When leaders of nations are willing to consider the needs and perplexities of one another, then will the spirit of Christ prevail and a real peace will be the result. Christ said: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you." When are we going to claim Christ's legacy of peace? Not until we are willing to practice the Golden Rule in our international affairs. God speed the day when nations "shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

The religious world is itself sadly in need of the application of the principles of Christ to-day. With

the whole world crying aloud for some one to lead the way forward, we find the church unable to accept the challenge. She can not present a united front to the great needs of a waiting world. Before the church can act as a saving force, she must extricate herself from her own present plight. To-day the non-Christian world is skeptically asking, "Can the Golden Rule of Jesus be practiced by the followers of Jesus?" The answer is, "It not only can be, but it must be." The practice of what we profess is the only thing that will bring back the unity and potency of the early church. The great strength of that early church lay in the fact of a real unity. Paul said: "So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." We shall go far toward the realization of a common brotherhood when our leaders are willing to assemble around the council tables, and, in the light of divine truth, consider the points of agreement as well as the points of disagreement. When that time comes the church will be able to reach forth a saving hand to the whole world. Christ prayed for a united church "that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." When they thus become one the world will believe.

It is common knowledge that Jesus' principle of good will to others works out in individual relationships. There is no conceivable reason why it will not work out in the various activities of all humanity. Some thought of the ultimate triumph of the principles of Christ over the perplexities and anxieties of the world is contained in the lines of Tennyson as he writes of the birth of Christ:

The World and the Way Forward

"Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor;
Ring in redress to all mankind.

"Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

"Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right;
Ring in the common love of good.

"Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand years of old;
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

"Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land;
Ring in the Christ that is to be."

IV.

THE MISUNDERSTOOD CHRIST

BY FRANK G. HELME.

(John 2: 23-25.)

MISUNDERSTANDING of man, and that which is in him, is almost as nearly universal as the misunderstanding of God. When the Jews in Jerusalem heard of the unusual preaching of John the Baptist, they sent emissaries to him with but one question: "Who art thou?" In other words: "You come without preparation, publicity, pride or pelf—who are you?" This query is not one of any certain year, or decade, or even an age. It is the wording of one of those timeless problems which, because it deals with the rich and the poor, we shall always have with us. The greatest debates in this world will center around this theme. Our social veneers demand that each person move in his proper category. Occasionally the lowest in these categories, a "Dumb Terror," rises "to judge the world, after the silence of the centuries." To meet and do away with this eternal unrest came the Prince of peace, Jesus our Lord. As He came "he needed not that any one should bear witness concerning man; for he himself knew what was in man" (John 2: 25).

Jesus came not only to reveal God in His fullness. He came also to discover for man his real manhood, and through that manhood the godlikeness within him. Jesus saw the intrinsic worth of the individual however

The Misunderstood Christ

downtrodden by the alignments of age-old prejudices. The "phantasmagoria" of social, political, racial, military, economic or religious colorings, so precious to the would-be topmost few, were invisible to Him.

"The rank is but the guinea stamp—
The man's the gowd for a' that!"

In the perfection of the Saviour the lowest of the earth may achieve the rewards of heaven on an equality with the earth's highest. As with the kingdom of heaven, so with the individual. Jesus would say: "Lo, the value of your life in the currency of God is not according to this marking nor that stamping—it is within you! You are a child of God."

Blind to the burdened of the earth, the elect of His day could not believe a King who came saying: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden." Had not the Psalmist correctly estimated the position of man when he said, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?"? Surely the Mosaic laws were very specific in stating that only the most strict in their observance could hope to receive the blessings of God. Even the great mystery cults in their highest form demand that only the purest, the most intellectual, or the wealthiest, need apply. So the mystified Pharisees say of Jesus, "This man receiveth sinners." Celsus, that most powerful debater and opponent of the early church, thought he was with point representing the gospel preacher as proclaiming: "Let no educated, wise or prudent man approach; if any one is illiterate, foolish, untaught, a babe in knowledge, let him come."

The problem of conversion has always been a Gordian knot for those who know only mental living. Even

to-day we find ourselves, or our church elect if we are not of them, sitting in judgment regarding the man who is "out," and we deliberate as to whether we should let him "in"—this we do regardless of church polity. It is hard for a selfish heart to see what is in another heart. When subjected to the Light Ineffable, it may blossom into the full flower of sonship with God. Jesus could see. He out-philosophizes the philosopher, because "He knew what was in man."

Knowing man, Jesus was man's greatest teacher. He gave love the pre-eminence in His teaching. All the teachers of the religions of the world stressed some one idea to the novitiates of their faith. Jesus proclaimed, explained and fulfilled love. He knew love to be the one great, unsatisfied longing of man. This love He brought and taught, and made His religion the supreme religion. This love He presented to man by revealing God as a loving Father. This love He made triumphant and complete in His own life among men—thus glorifying humanity. Through the medium of this love men knew Him as one who taught "not as the scribes." Life was His classroom as well as His theme. There could be in Him no theoretic pronouncements—He had experienced all of life. No part of it thereafter could be exempt from His radiance.

"The Son of man came to seek and to save that which [by all the best developed and accepted standards] was lost." And so the lost ones of society came to Him. He could love the most beautiful or He could love those whom others looked upon as the most hideous. He could love the most accomplished or the most crude. The sick, the needy and the outcast found as ready a welcome as any other. The masses marched

The Misunderstood Christ

many miles to where they "heard him gladly." Roofs were torn from houses that the sick might be lowered to His feet. By thousands they sat on the seashore, steaming in the sun, thoughtless of the coming of mealtime and dark, daring not to lose a single word of His discourse. Foreigners broke the bonds of racial antagonisms to pick up the crumbs of knowledge that fell from His superabundant wisdom. By towns they acknowledged Him as the Messiah. In the center of Zion a hitherto helpless cripple proudly carried his couch on the Sabbath day. Wherever a sheep had strayed, there was Jesus with time to help the wandering one back to the flock. Wherever a part of the coinage of human life had dropped, there was Jesus to find it, and restore it to usefulness in the household of faith. If one of the children of men had wasted his inheritance in far-off places, Jesus was watching for the day when He could run and welcome that child back to the fireside of the Father. The sick had long needed a great physician—He was the great Physician. In being so He made Himself the religious scandal of the hypocritical times.

The avenues of escape from the pressures of living, which Jesus pointed out, were wonderful; but more wondrous was the Father to whom He led. Love, from the lips of the Christ, became more than the statement of an ideal. To Christ love was a life principle. He carried love to its perfection in the presentation of the Father to His children. To the mob that could understand nothing of the deeper values of life, the mob that never thought, the mob that delighted in its power for savagery, Jesus came with the Father. To the publicans, self-exiled from their race, greedy for the things

that feed the senses, extorting from kindred in the name of the law, a terror to the poor and terrified by political superiors, rotting in the midst of plenty, Jesus came with the Father. To the lepers, slaves, harlots and other social exiles, living in the depths of physical rottenness, writhing beneath the bondage terrible, conjuring horrible rebellion on some to-morrow, straining for freedom and finding only husks, Jesus came as the Elder Brother with "the Father of lights with whom is no variableness." "To the lost sheep of the house of Israel," wanderers from strange lands, worshipers of temple rites, offerers of sacrifices full of blemish, the unforgiven and unforgiving, Jesus came as the Messiah of prophecy to usher in the reign of God the Father. These things Jesus did because He knew man as a being of infinite spiritual endowments and possibilities despite the surface storms seen by earthly eyes. In every man He could see a potential son of God.

Rome in power over Israel, swaggering through the streets of the Holy City, making and breaking the high priesthood, disregarding domestic relations, taking anything and everything, was anathema to the Jews. One day, however, an officer of the Roman legions sent to Jesus to come and heal a servant sick of the palsy. Because of the officer's courtesy and respect, despite his relationship to Israel, Jesus answers his call, and, healing the servant, says, "I have not found such faith, no, not in Israel." Beneath the armor of Rome there beat the heart of a man. Jesus knew him. He saw in him a candidate for the sonship of God.

The self-righteous prayer of the Pharisee, spoken from the temple steps, was the admiration of many. It bespoke spiritual egotism. It was the envy of many

The Misunderstood Christ

beginners in the expression of faith. To Jesus it was but a clanging cymbal. He turned away to the edge of the crowd, and there heard and blessed the humble, faltering prayer of the publican.

It is said that on one of the shelves of a little shop in Rome there long lay a pretty stone, considered by its owner but a bauble, with a commercial value of a few pennies. One day it came into the possession of a man who knew precious stones. The little bauble became a priceless diamond. So Jesus discovered the diamond personalities of His day, as He discovers them in our day, amidst all the discolorings of earth. In the hurry and bustle of living we may never see the real worth of precious souls that live near us. But Jesus knows what is in all men.

Jesus knew man; He became one of the sons of men. He came as the Son of man. It was an unknown role. Long had all the Jews looked for the day when their God would remember their woes and send them a Saviour. He was to be "Wonderful." He was to be a "Counsellor." He would be the "Prince of Peace." All that was marvelous, all that was regal, all that was powerful, all that was beyond the fondest dreams of men, would be seen in the Messiah. And then He came—but He came as the lowly Jesus. The Son of God, the right royal Man of Israel, the noblest scion of the house of David, first takes His breath in a stall surrounded by the beasts of the field. He begins life in the home of a forgotten family. He plays as other children play. He eats the most common food. He hears the simple, uncouth chatter of the lowest classes. He lives in touch with the heartaches of humanity. He learns the lore of men. He works

His way through the carpentry shop to a trade. He asks questions of the temple leaders as boys ask questions to-day. He hears the call of God. He teaches infinite truth in the humble language of Galilee. He uses the simple words and illustrations of the life round about Him. He draws around Himself the unorthodox of every village and province into which He goes. He talks with lepers. He forgives the adulterous. He dines with sinners. What a royal Man!

In the Beginners department of one of our schools a little girl heard the story of the Christ as having come to life in a "barn." She had previously been very anxious for Sunday to come that she might go to church, but now she refused to attend. All mother's persuasive power was unavailing. She would not go. "Why?" And mother heard her daughter, in the halting terminology of a tot, pour out her contempt for a "dirty, ragged little baby born in a barn." Her teacher had given her the wrong idea, but so always have babes in Christ measured people for pre-eminence. Scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees and others had not yet grown to that grace where "in one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and are all made to drink of one Spirit." Clothes even to-day have been known to make and set apart the man.

Jesus, having experienced all the sufferings, heart-aches and temptings that come to the ordinary and the extraordinary without favor, knew man.

The incarnation could not demean God. It did not demean Christ. It did lift man. The possibility of having God as our Father demands that we become sons. This was Jesus' inspiration for those who met

The Misunderstood Christ

Him and knew Him. He showed them how to share the privileges of sonship by being responsible for god-like qualities in themselves and in the world. To lower the idealism of Christ would bring Him into contempt in the eyes of those who see Him nowhere but in us. His elevation, while incarnate, is His charm and His potency. He said: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself." By elevating Him we elevate ourselves—and all of life is elevated with us. Too many times we are not known for good fruits in Him because we have lifted Him, not "from the earth," but only to another part of the earth. Everywhere Jesus went the lowest of the earth could become sharers in a partnership with the highest of creation. And so it is even now.

Out on the shore of Galilee there came a man. Like other men, He walked as one accustomed to that country, loving it, thrilling to it, every bit a part of it. Near by on the bosom of the sea is a busy brotherhood. Peter and Andrew are engaged in the age-old task of catching fish for the market. This is the family business. It has been the family business there for generations. There is profit in this work. A short distance away lies Capernaum, noted for its fish. From this city fish are sent to all the tables of wealth in the world. "From Galilee to the grand" is a familiar fish story. So well can they accomplish their task, these fishermen have time to look about, taking in the beauties of the day, being neighbor to others who labor near at kindred tasks. In the midst of these labors the One who walks is seen! He is familiar to them all. He has been that way before. To them the earth with

all its fullness was made for Him. Though they know it not, this is the day of all days for them.

Of all the decisions they ever made, the one they now make is most momentous. Those words, never to be forgotten, ring out: "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." It is to the glory of the Christ and these two brothers that they straightway left everything to start on the greatest venture of faith the world has ever witnessed. Their task they could do blindfolded. It was one of the inferior occupations of the day, but it took the leap with them. It became a part of the kingdom of heaven. The things they were already doing, by the power of their new allegiance, became an instrument of God. Their ingenuity in catching fish was to be used in wielding the sword of the Spirit. Their endurance of cold nights when lashed by winds and waves, and their patience in oft-times profitless labors, were now to be used for Heaven's purposes. The power of Christ to lift the abilities of men when those abilities were cheerfully offered launched a new creative force in the world. One of the world's humblest occupations became a glorious profession. The incarnation was re-enacted in them. This incarnation is as much a part of Pentecost as the birth of Jesus was a part of His resurrection. When all the world would have passed them by, Jesus took possession and transformed them for partnership in the transformation of the world.

Again, one day while Jesus was passing through the summer resort of the Levites, Jericho, there were many who quickly told the news of His coming. In the midst of a busy day the crowd gathered about Him. So great was this multitude that one man climbed a tree

The Misunderstood Christ

to be able to see Him. This man was little of stature; he was little in body; he was little in spiritual height and depth and outreach. However, he must see this Jesus whose words and works were being published everywhere. Had he need of spiritual advice, or did he view the Master as a possible economic asset? Did he seek the publicity of having the great Teacher dine in his home? We know not. We do know that when Jesus passed the sycamore in which sat this miniature man, He called Zacchæus down that He might dine in his home that day. And Zacchæus made haste to come down. He received Jesus with much joy. How the crowd murmured! Was not this little man a noted sinner? Was he not a corrupt politician in the employ of Rome? How could Christ dwell even for a meal-time in the home of such a man? Yet even as the murmurings rise they vanish. The sinless One has met this sinner. A Saviour has come seeking to save the lost.

It matters not what was said that day. The viands upon the table need no description. The furnishings of that home are of no moment. Even the past that made these things possible can no more be held in memory. For out of that hour there came a new being. He looked like the same Zacchæus who had entered with the Christ. To the eye of the world his measure was the same, but not so with the Son of man who knew what was in man. A revolution took place that day which can not be defined by the ordinary units of measure. It was a surprise to Zacchæus. He cries: "Behold! Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wrongfully exacted aught from any man, I restore fourfold." "Impossible!" the

neighborhood had said. Possible! Jesus had known. No person of small stature, no one of warped nature, no grasping, greedy soul, can seek the presence of Jesus Christ and fail to arise to a newness of life.

"Down Sychar way" go Jesus and His disciples. It is strange territory there. The people are of the same race as the disciples. They look like them. They worship like them. They even worship the same God. But they worship in different places, and so are unfriendly to one another. It was a common hope with the Jews in general that they might be able to call fire down upon the Samaritans—and in their desire the Samaritans returned the compliment. Near the town of Sychar was a well, built many years before by Jacob. Here Jesus stopped to rest while the disciples went on into the town in search of food. It seemed an ideal place to rest, here by this ancient well, for the better people went to a well on the other side of the town, leaving this for only infrequent visitation.

But, as usual, His vacation was all too brief. He was interrupted by a sheep without a shepherd. He never turned aside from the call of a wounded lamb. Out to this lonely well had come one of the town's slum-dwellers. She dared not use the other well. Shame for a past and shamers of the present had decreed it. But Jesus spoke to her! Though only asking for a drink of water, His words came as a shock. "Why," she said, "do you, a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan?" There is pride of race even in the worst of us. Then came His answer in those wondrous words and tones which must have made this queen of Sychar's slums view Him with alarm, despair

The Misunderstood Christ

and eternal hope. Even the prejudiced minds of the disciples could not temper her joy. They said not a word, but marveled at Jesus' actions. The woman left—but she did not leave to forget. Back in the city she quickly told the story of her recent experience. So changed was she that the town believed her. The people streamed out to the well to see the Christ. They begged Him to abide there. He stayed two days. The food the disciples had brought, Jesus would not eat. This response to the call of God was His food. Here was a harvest for the disciples. It was a long time till the fields supplying good things to eat would be white unto harvest, but for Him and them they were white now for a greater harvest. The woman at the well, an evil woman, a foreigner, through the redeeming power of the Son of God can win a city to righteousness. The Son of man, being the Son of God, is able to revamp misshapen life. There is no depth too great for Him to reach and redeem.

Man, practically unknown to himself, shall always be unknown in the world. This is an eternal issue. Born out of the love of the Father above, Jesus came as the apostle of love to all humanity. Among us He lived and moved and had His being. He not only broke the fetters of death—He removed the bonds of life. All the ages to Him belong: past, present and future. We are partakers with Him of His glory. He brought us a loving Father and the privilege of being sons with Him. Whatever your veneer, wherever your life, however bent your soul, by whomever else you are unknown, Jesus knows that which is within you. "Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor

powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord," if you will grant Him permission to possess your life. The Christ who was misunderstood, but who understands us better than we understand ourselves, calls to you, He runs to you, He reaches out to you. With you lies the responsibility for your future. Take Him, who alone knows you, while you may.

V.

THE SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE

BY ARTHUR E. WORTHY.

"Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you."—Acts 1: 8.

INTRODUCTION.

WITH the new emphasis which to-day we are giving to Pentecost, we recognize as never before the absolute necessity for brethren whose lives are dominated by the Spirit of God, who think as Christ thought, who live as He lived, and who pray as He prayed. Preachers, evangelists, Bible-school workers, yes, all of us, must confess that the work of the kingdom has been done too much in human strength and wisdom. Because of this the program of the church has been retarded, and the forces of Satan are running rampant in society. The call of this hour is for Spirit-filled disciples who can rise above human wisdom and strength; who will not be sidetracked by the critical attitudes and petty jealousies of men; who will rise above the frailties and passions of the flesh, and who will think and act in terms of the Spirit.

The upper-room experience of the disciples of Jesus, following His resurrection and ascension, can not be understood except in the light of the background of three years of personal contact with the Master. Indeed, we must go back of that and see them as the fish-

ermen of Galilee, as tax-collectors and business men. Their conception of God was indeed crude, and their thought of the Messianic kingdom quite foreign to the reality. Jesus spent three years with them in order to reveal God to them, to get them to think as He thought, to live as He lived, and to pray as He prayed. This was no easy task. Step by step they were led to this new conception of life, and not until Pentecost can we observe that Jesus was successful in His efforts. Once they had asked the Master to teach them to pray; but not until after the ascension did they learn the art of praying. They had been thinking too much in terms of the material. They had loved Jesus because He was most lovable, and were willing to do anything for Him, yet they saw little of the spiritual element in His life and could not see beyond His death. Perhaps this led Him to say, "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you." So long as He was with them in the body they could think only of an earthly Messiah and kingdom.

Why did not Jesus permit the Holy Spirit to come immediately after His ascension, instead of ten days later, so that the work of the kingdom might be begun and the disciples be not left in suspense? The reason is apparent; they were not ready to receive Him; they were not clear in their own thinking, and they had not learned how to pray. How, then, could the Holy Spirit take full possession of their lives? But the marvelous revelation of the Father, and the stupendous facts of the gospel were now in their minds, and it but remained for them to think and to pray things through to get the proper conception of Christ and

The Spirit-filled Life

His kingdom. I believe this is what they did during those ten days in the upper room.

I. LET US NOTE THE FINAL STEP WHEREBY THE DISCIPLES BECAME SPIRIT-FILLED MEN.

"These all with one accord continued stedfastly in prayer." Are we to understand that they prayed either audibly or silently for the entire ten-day period? I believe not, yet their thoughts were entirely on spiritual things. They poured out their hearts to God; they became silent and let the Lord speak to them. There were periods when they would recall the sayings of Christ, and discussions would follow. The Old Testament was reread in the light of their recent experiences. I have pictured the group in my own mind. Peter is the recognized leader, and, after a season of prayer, asks the apostles to recall incidents in the life of Jesus, and he begins with his own experience.

"You remember," he said, "when our Master told me He had prayed for me, and when I was converted to strengthen my brethren; and when I confessed Him as the Christ, the Son of the living God, at Cæsarea Philippi, He said that upon this rock He would build His church, and the gates of Hades should not prevail against it. But after three years of fellowship with Him I had to deny Him, and just when He needed me most. Brethren, I didn't know Him; I had the wrong conception of His Messiahship, and when I saw that they were going to kill Him I became afraid."

Then Philip, that matter-of-fact apostle, said: "Yes, and you recall the day when He took the few loaves and fishes and fed the multitudes out on the hillside. But we did not learn the lesson He tried to teach

us. He said: 'Ye seek me, not because ye saw signs, but because ye ate of the loaves, and were filled. Work not for the food which perisheth, but for the food which abideth unto eternal life, which the Son of man shall give unto you' (John 6:27). How foolish we were that we did not understand."

James, of the inner circle, rises to speak. "Peter and John, you well remember the day we saw Him transfigured on the mountaintop, and how afraid and overwhelmed we were. We heard our Lord speak to Moses and Elijah of His death on the cross, but little of it did we comprehend. Now, I see my risen Lord on the throne of His glory, interceding for us at the right hand of God. I hear Him say, even yet, 'Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.'"

Thomas, who was absent when Jesus first appeared to the apostles, speaks: "How vividly the scene comes back to me that day in Galilee when our Lord said He must return to Jerusalem, and be killed by the elders, and I said we would go with Him, and die also. Yes, He told us He would rise from the grave, but I did not believe Him, and when you brethren told me that you had seen Him alive I would not believe until I could see Him for myself. Oh that I ever should have doubted! I understand better now what He meant when He said: 'It is expedient for you that I go away.' He was God come in the flesh, and we did not recognize Him."

There followed a season of prayer, in which the disciples asked God the meaning of all these things, begged forgiveness for their lack of faith, and pleaded with Him that they might never lose this spiritual vision of the Christ and His kingdom. John, the beloved

The Spirit-filled Life

apostle, then told how they had first thought of Jesus as a prophet—one who should redeem Israel. Then came the revelation that He was with God from the very beginning, and had come to earth in human form to reveal God, and to give His life that men might have everlasting life. John climaxed his message with the words of Jesus: "Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you, for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also."

Cleopas, to whom Jesus appeared on the way to Emmaus, was asked by Peter to read a passage of Scripture. He did so, and told how Jesus had explained it to them. He called attention to the 109th Psalm, "Let his days be few; and let another take his office," showing how it related to Judas, who betrayed Jesus, and went to his own reward. Peter then asked that they proceed to elect one to succeed him. After asking the guidance of the Spirit, they elected Matthias.

There is no doubt but that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was one of the central figures of that upper-room group, and many must have been the questions asked her about the events surrounding the birth of Jesus, His boyhood and home life. Perhaps for the first time Mary rightly interpreted the life of her son. Before, she had pondered in her heart the things which the angels had told her, the visit of the Wise-men, the saying of Jesus at the temple, and the many strange happenings in His life. At times she had thought Him beside Himself; now she sees Him in His

glory and majesty. She thanks God that she was the vessel chosen to bring Him into the world; begs forgiveness for her lack of understanding, and prays that she might be worthy to be called a humble disciple of His.

The ten-day period was near an end. The disciples knew not when the Holy Spirit was to manifest His presence, but they sensed that He was near at hand, and they were reminded of the words of the Master that the Comforter would come and guide them into all truth. Indeed, the Spirit was moving in the lives of the disciples in the upper-room experience, but not until the tenth day did He take such full possession of their lives that visibly they had to express that new relationship to the thousands who had gathered in Jerusalem for the celebration of the Jewish Pentecost.

It became the first Christian Pentecost, because these disciples had waited in the spirit of prayer until they should be endued with power from on high. The marvelous victories of the early church following Pentecost came because the disciples "continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers." They had learned how to pray and knew what Jesus meant when He said, "Men ought always to pray and not to faint." Paul had this same spirit when he admonished the disciples to "pray without ceasing." Modern Pentecosts will mean much or little to the church, in the degree to which every follower of Christ has surrendered to the leading of the Spirit, and maintains a constant and vital contact with Him. Likewise, modern general conditions of righteousness will depend upon the spiritual life and loyalty of the followers of Christ.

The Spirit-filled Life

II. IN WHAT MEASURE SHOULD DISCIPLES TO-DAY BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT?

I used to pray, and so have many of you prayed, "Lord, as we come into thy presence." Should such a prayer ever be made unless we have really wandered away from God? What excuse have we for getting out of His presence? Should we not live with Him? Do we only enjoy His presence when we enter the house of the Lord or when we pray, and do we lose His presence when we leave His house or when we say "Amen"? If so, our Christianity has little value for us, and our God is a strange God instead of the God whom Jesus revealed. On the other hand, I believe the Scriptures teach us and that experience verifies it, that God so loved sinning humanity that He sent Christ, His only Son, with the expectation that people would catch the divine fire, and, under its melting and molding process, be gradually transformed into His image and likeness.

Paul wrote: "For whom he foreknew, he also fore-ordained to be conformed to the image of his Son." But if the divine fire be permitted to die out after periods of worship, with the necessity for a rekindling each time we engage in worship, dare we think that we can be transformed into His likeness? I believe not. We surely believe that that gospel has power to lift men from the depths of sin to the very likeness of Christ; yet, as disciples of our Master, how many of us fail to demonstrate by a Spirit-filled life that this belief can and does become a reality?

It will help us just to stand up beside Jesus and look at Him in all the purity and stainlessness of His

life; to see Him going where everything was sinful, having contact with men who were suspicious, grasping, greedy, and who would kill one another in order to advance their own interests. Through it all we see Him walking with God; the divine fire is in His soul, and we hear Him say He can do nothing apart from His Father. Not only did He spend the long night watches in prayer, but amidst the pressing duties of the day He was always conscious of God's presence and guidance. He was calm on stormy Galilee because His heart was in tune with the Infinite. He walked to His cross as if to His coronation, saying with his last breath, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." "Into thy hands I commend my spirit." Pride and conceit, petty jealousies and evil thinking should be eliminated from our lives when we stand up alongside such a character. What an incentive to let the Spirit lead us, to let such a divine companion abide in our hearts, and to lead us into the abundant life.

The experience of the disciples just preceding Pentecost, and the life of Jesus as portrayed in the Gospels, ought to convince every believer that there can and must be a continuous contact with the Spirit of God, a permanent indwelling of His Spirit. Yet how many of us can truthfully admit such a marvelous relationship? Is it not true that in our modern church life we have spent too much time with the mechanics of things, and with the setting up and maintaining of an organization (as highly important as these things are), and have given too little thought to the spiritual side of life? It is of more importance that we teach our boys and girls how to pray and live in God's presence than it is to perfect class organizations. To impart

The Spirit-filled Life

the great facts of the gospel and of life to them is a matter of supreme moment. It is likewise of greater moment that there should be generated in every house of worship a spirit of reverence and a consciousness of the presence of God, than it is that there should be a large audience and an eloquent message by the preacher. There is a reason why more do not meet about the Lord's table on the Lord's Day to break bread and to have fellowship with Christ and with one another in this memorial institution. It is that people have not learned the art of living with God, and have little conception of what it means to have Christ in their hearts as an abiding companion. In calling a new minister churches might give greater consideration as to whether he be a Spirit-filled man who knows the art of praying and living with God, than to his pulpit ability or to his capability as a leader. Most any preacher can secure good recommendations and preach a good trial sermon, but does he live in God's presence?

When a believer has learned to let the Spirit have right of way during the performance of his daily tasks, then he may have a mountaintop experience at the Lord's house on the day of worship. He does not belong down among the quibblers, has no inclination to be critical of the choir or the preacher, is not interested in the latest gossip about sister so and so, or of planning his work for the next week, but he will be found up where the truth makes men free. I went up in an aeroplane one time. Things looked different to me from an attitude of thirty-five hundred feet. I couldn't see the mudholes or the filth and dirt, but only the beauty of God's universe and a great city with

its homes and business blocks. I am reminded that the disciples who saw Jesus transfigured had to climb a high mountain first. The other disciples of smaller faith remained on the lowlands overwhelmed with the sins and diseases of men, and giving a demonstration of their inability to meet their needs.

But we can't stay up on the mountain all the time, or in an aeroplane, or in the house of God; we must come down and go out to mingle again with the world on life's lowlands. But as Christ came down from the mountain with the three disciples, so He may come with us, and be our abiding Friend when the temptations of life assail us and when the pathway is rough and uncertain.

Men have tried to "pull themselves up by their own bootstraps," but without success. We can not rise above the common level on our own power; there has to be something higher than man that will lift him up. Men have tried to cleanse and purify their lives in their own strength, but without avail. Christ alone can forgive and make new. By surrendering to Him, letting Him take hold of our hands, we can be lifted up into the presence of God.

III. THE SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE IS THE ONLY LIFE THAT WILL BEAR GOOD FRUIT.

The marvelous works of the apostles as recorded in the early chapters of Acts so impressed the scribes and Pharisees that they marveled and took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. That was indeed the secret of their ministry. They had caught the meaning of the saying of their Master: "I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in

The Spirit-filled Life

him, the same beareth much fruit: for apart from me ye can do nothing. . . . If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." The primary business of every disciple is not to receive the vital currents of life from Jesus, but rather to accept them, by uniting his life with the Spirit, that he may bear fruit. The branch which does not bear fruit is cut off. Paul mentions some of the fruits of the Spirit—"love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control."

A gardener noticed that one of his plants was not doing well. He moved it into the sunlight, and the sun, millions of miles away, cast its rays upon the plant and it grew and brought forth a beautiful flower. Christ, the Sun of righteousness, can do this to men who have lived in darkness if they will only open their hearts to Him, who is the light of the world. It is scientifically held that all power is from above; that all energy is traceable to the sun, which radiates a million horse-power of solar energy per square yard out into space. The earth intercepts but an infinitesimal part, but what a great amount of power is at our disposal! Power in the wind and waterfall; power in brain and physical body; power in the unbridled lightning brought down to earth by Franklin and harnessed by Edison, Marconi and Bell. What marvelous things man is doing with this power, and how much easier it makes it to believe in God. And surely man will be able to do greater things when he learns to better use the mysterious spiritual power from on high. Man is capable of infinite development in the

degree that he brings his life into contact with the Spirit of God, in the sense that the healthy, fruit-bearing branch is related to the vine.

We usually put new converts to work as soon as possible, for we have learned the truth of the adage, "Use me or lose me." But do the trees bear fruit before they put forth buds and leaves, and have been cultivated, irrigated, and have received the benefit of the warm sunshine? Is it not of greater importance that our new converts be given the proper spiritual environment than that they be given a task to perform? The new-born babe needs proper care and nourishment, and not responsibility. New converts are babes in Christ, and need first the milk and an environment that will grow a spiritual life.

But the time comes when there must be an expression of the Christ-filled life, just as Pentecost expressed the Spirit-filled life of the disciples after the upper-room experience. "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away." We have been assured that the divine Husbandman will give us time to bear fruit. But beware, lest the time slip by and the harvest season be at hand, and we have no fruit for Him; no souls for our hire, no burdens lightened, no hungry fed. To be fruit-bearers we must merge our lives with Christ. "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments." Perfect love means perfect relationship. Let us not try to bear fruit apart from Christ, who is the vine, for that would mean to fail.

Man's wisdom without God is of no avail. When the Black Death swept London in 1665 a terrific toll of life was taken, and doctors, nurses and others worked without avail to stem the tide. In 1666 there came the

The Spirit-filled Life

great fire which almost burned London to the ground. But what the strength and skill of men could not do the fire did; it destroyed the germs of the malignant disease and renovated the city with its purifying power. Even so, men are helpless to-day without the divine fire from heaven that alone can halt the plague of sin that works such havoc in this life of yours and mine. Without this purifying and quickening power we can not bear fruit.

The greatest need of to-day is Christian living. We have been thinking and working for the evangelization of the world; but it should be no less than the Christianization of the world. We must begin at our own hearthstone, and then reach the entire social order. We must be genuinely Christian, and that means that the fruits of the Spirit must be more manifest in our lives. There is too little difference between professing Christians and those who profess allegiance to the world. No wonder we have been so slow in advancing the interests of the kingdom.

CONCLUSION.

“Ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you.” Then comes the great manifestations of the Spirit. Not by mere decision or resolution can we win the world for Christ, and transform the kingdoms of the world into the kingdom of God. Not by mere calling upon the Lord in some high moment of unselfishness can we call down fire from heaven. The disciples, into whose lives the Spirit came on the first Christian Pentecost, were far different from the fishermen whom Jesus called from Galilee. Then they had little thought above their

boats, and perhaps no dream beyond their nets. Before they became fishers of men, who had given the Holy Spirit right of way in their lives, they had to have three years of association with Jesus, and to have been witnesses of His death, resurrection and ascension.

Let us so live in the presence of God that we may bear good fruit, and we shall then see the kingdom of the Lord established upon the earth.

VI.

THE CHURCH AND THE CHANGING ORDER

BY PERCY THOMAS.

"Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever; for wisdom and might are his. And he changeth the times and the seasons."—Dan. 2: 20, 21.

THIS statement is a part of a prayer of thanksgiving on the part of Daniel because God had revealed to him the dream of Nebuchadnezzar. The king had a dream, and because of it his spirit was sorely troubled. And this is not as peculiar a circumstance as we might at first think it to be. You can find people to-day who believe in dreams, who place much emphasis upon them; people who are ever so careful of their conduct in the days following some strange dream—they are afraid that the dream is but a warning of some distress that will surely overtake them. They live with a pall of fear hanging over them until they are either overtaken by some strange coincidence or until they feel that a crisis has passed.

After a very restless night there are some people who begin the day with fear and trembling because of a dream. Fantastic or grotesque images flitted through the mind the night before. They may be unable to recall just what the dream was about, but they know they had it.

King Nebuchadnezzar had some such experience. He had a dream, yet he could not recall what the dream was, but his mind was full of dread. His attempt to ease his troubled spirit was to call in the wise men, the magicians and the enchanters of his kingdom, and demand of them on pain of death that they recall to his mind the forgotten dream, and to render its interpretation.

A hopeless task indeed! For who is it that can read the mind of another? Yet not so hopeless to one who lived in the favor of almighty God, for, while Daniel lay asleep upon his bed, in some way, so the record says, God revealed to him the dream of the king and also gave to him its interpretation.

You recall the dream, I am sure. It was of the great image made of various substances—its head of fine brass and its feet of clay. And “a stone was cut out without hands which smote the image upon its feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them in pieces. . . . And the wind carried them away, so that no place was found for them; and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.”

As should be the conduct of every man whenever it is that God gives to him a blessing, there comes forth out of the heart of Daniel a prayer of gratitude. Among the expressions that Daniel uses in his prayer we find the words used as a text to-day: “Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever; for wisdom and might are his. And he changeth the times and the seasons.”

I. THE FACT OF CHANGE.

I am thinking especially to-day of the latter part of the text: “He changeth the times and the seasons.”

The Church and the Changing Order

This sentiment may be found several times in the Bible—that of the fact of change in the order of this world. Many of the ancient writers looked with far-seeing eyes to the changes that would surely take place in various ways in the affairs of this world. The Psalmist, speaking of the physical universe, says: "They shall perish, but thou shalt endure. . . . As a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed." The prophet Isaiah, referring to the same fact of change, says: "The world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish." And again, it is none other than the great apostle to the Gentiles, writing to the Corinthians, who said: "For the fashion of this world passeth away."

This same thought is expressed by one of the old Grecian philosophers in the word, "Everything is in flux and flow," while another said, "Thou shalt not bathe in the same stream twice," and a pupil of his added, "nor even once." So this thought of change in the world is not something peculiar to modern thinking; ancient philosophers and writers of Holy Scripture alike thought of it.

But the concept of the God of the inspired men who wrote the Bible is somewhat different from ours to-day. Jehovah was not some one always far off from them, but He was in the midst of all the changes and turnings encountered by man. More than that, He was there directing the changes for man's good. In that respect their thought of Him is somewhat different from the thought of many to-day who take such great pride in the progress that the race has made.

Now, there are such rapid changes taking place that one often wonders if all is not a dream rather

than a reality. It is often said that if the dead of fifty years ago were to arise, they would not believe this world to be their former dwelling-place, for the changes wrought in that time have been so revolutionary. Every phase of life is changing at a rapid pace. It is a tremendous task for the average man properly to adjust himself to the swift changes of to-day. Everything seems to be in a constant state of flux.

The sad part of it all is that the world is coming in for a great deal of criticism because of the manifest change going on everywhere. Sincere men and women are being derided because they approve of some of these adjustments taking place in the life of the world: while others have become the objects of persecution because they believe and advocate even greater change. Much of our difficulty lies in the fact that we have grown into a heritage that has thought of this world as a stationary affair—that a certain fixity was the main thing; that the less change there occurred the more like the kingdom of God this world became.

But modern knowledge gives us a totally different idea. We know to-day that "change is a basic law of the universe." Down deep in the heart of the earth wonderful changes are going on even now. Primeval forests and glades have slowly been transforming into great veins of coal or lakes of oil—and the process is still at work. There is no mountain range to-day that at some time in ages past was not cast up out of the seas; no continent that perhaps at one time was not the bed of an ocean or covered with mountains of ice. Very little animal life abounds to-day that has not undergone stages of development. Crea-

The Church and the Changing Order

tures that once roamed the earth are now extinct, and new forms have appeared.

The mountains of ice in the eternal snow of Arctic lands sometimes break into huge icebergs that drift slowly with the currents into warmer waters. The ice changes by degrees into water; the water, again played upon by the summer suns, changes into vapor. Metals corrode and change their form; flowers give off their lovely fragrance and brighten the home by their presence—these in the very process of being beautiful change their form and wither away.

We ourselves are changing! If science is correct, then each seven years we have grown entirely new physical bodies. This very self that looks out upon a world of changing order is itself changing. The adult does not see life as he did when a child, nor perhaps even as he did five years ago. Man's own self is constantly undergoing a tremendous change.

That principle is at work everywhere. It plays a large part in our lives, too. Each generation has to adapt itself to constantly changing conditions, and to-day adaptations must take place quickly or one is lost in the maze. Some one has well said that there is more difference between us and our grandfathers than there was between Queen Victoria and Cleopatra. Science of fifty years ago did not know the cause of disease. One hundred years ago medical science did not know that the blood was a stream circulating through the body. Anæsthetics were but a dream. Things that are common to-day were only visions of the wildest fanatics two generations ago. What took Admiral Peary three years to accomplish is to-day done in sixteen hours, and to-morrow the time will be less.

Change also characterizes man's attitude towards life. Attitudes are different from what they were a half-century ago. Automobiles and railroads were once simply devices of the devil. Things that to-day are taken for granted would, by our fathers, have been thought of as decidedly immoral. Everything in this world is in a condition of flux. Change, constant change!

II. CHANGE IS GOOD.

I believe that the suggestions that I have made are all that is necessary to enable us to see the fact of a changing order in the world. And since we understand better now the fact of change, perhaps we should have a different feeling about it.

As I live in the knowledge of the constantly varying conditions of life, there are two primary interests that impel me as I attempt to understand the will of God and as I try to follow the example of Jesus Christ. The first of these interests is, that change is good. This constantly fluctuating aspect of life is something for which we should be deeply grateful to our heavenly Father.

But opposed to this conviction is the generation of men and women who have suffered untold heartaches; the sincere men and women who have shed bitter tears all because of their dread of the hopelessness of this world due to its constantly changing conditions. Christian fathers and mothers to-day bend their knees in prayer to almighty God to ask for guidance in the directing of their children, because the children are not living as their parents lived when the elders themselves were children. Other fathers and mothers

The Church and the Changing Order

who know not how to bend their knees in prayer are facing what they believe to be a hopeless task of making good men and women of their growing boys and girls. All their dread is due to their fear of altering present-day conditions.

This attitude of dread and fear is seen in all walks of life. One internationally known clergyman is always so pessimistic in his utterances about the hopelessness of things that he has been called "The Gloomy Dean."

But, my good friends, change is not necessarily an evil thing—it may be a good thing! It is not always something full of wickedness, but it is often something overflowing with wonderful possibilities for good. A very famous preacher referring to present-day tendencies said: "Change may rotate us out of harmony with some things, but, thank God, it is also rotating us into new and strange experiences that can be used for so much good."

Of course, not all change is progress. Going forward sometimes means going in the wrong direction. Moral standards have changed to a very great degree. Some of the change has been real progress, but some possibilities of degeneracy have increased. The last war furnishes abundant evidence that all change does not mean progress.

But, my friends, what if there were no change at all in my life? It would be the most hopeless thing imaginable! If everything were static, how really hopeless and dismal this world would be.

The world is not yet good enough for that. There is still too much poverty, too much of evil, too much of hatred. There are still too many wars for us to

desire no change. The world has not yet reached that condition in which we want it to stay. The moral ideals of our race are not yet good enough. There must still be more of a creative attitude rather than so much complacent conformity to things as they are. So there must still be many, many more changes in every sphere of life before we should be satisfied.

III. THE CHARACTER OF THE CHANGE.

We are often being told these days that this is a scientific age in which we are living. Every phase of life is being subjected to a scientific analysis, and every activity must make a definite contribution to the welfare of mankind else it is thrown into the discard. But this change of which I have been speaking is not primarily scientific! Neither is it primarily an affair of the sociologist, though we hear much to-day of the social sciences and the social gospel and social betterment. What I mean to say is that this dynamic spirit of change that we are witnessing to-day is not a mere secular affair. With all the emphasis at my command I say that the purpose in this whirling change is deeply religious! God is in it! He not only approves of it, but God is a vital part of it!

What matters it if even generations of men have had to suffer, bound by various fetters while the world was changing, if the great program of our God was being worked out. Ultimately, according to the Psalmist, "the wicked shall be confounded." Can the hosts of Pharaoh, mighty though they be, take captive again that demoralized mob of Israelites when God is with them? Is not even a half-hearted assembly, championed by Jehovah, better than an enemy host?

The Church and the Changing Order

I believe in God: I believe in Jesus Christ, the Master of men, and in the revelation that He has given of the heavenly Father. I believe implicitly the Scriptures when they say, "All things work together for good to them that love God."

If the changes that occur affect you personally and in but a small way, it is a part of the great plan of God. If they are such as to vitally affect your home or mine, God is in them. He is a vital factor there. If they concern the local church, your spiritual home and mine, God is there. Yea, if the changes are of such dimensions as to shake the very foundations of a race and vitally affect the man or woman living in the remotest corner of far-off Tibet, God not only knows of it—not only approves of it—but the change itself is of His doing. He is in it and that is all that matters.

In the long ago Polycarp, the aged Bishop of Smyrna, was dragged to the stake because of his belief in the Christ. His friends pleaded with him to recant. But while the fagots were being piled about him his only answer was: "Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He has blessed me, and shall I deny Him now?" Polycarp suffered untold agony, yet who will say that the world is not far richer and the kingdom of God nearer, because Polycarp lived his life just as he did, though it was a life of suffering? Savonarola lived in a static world. The kingdom of God was at a standstill, and against such a condition the voice of Savonarola cried out. He was led to the gallows, and while his body dangled there the fagots were lighted about it and it was burned. Who will say that the world is not far richer and the kingdom of God nearer

because of the inspiration that has come to multitudes from these lives?

These are but types of men and women who through the ages have seen the hand of God at work amidst all the varying conditions of life. To them the question was not whether they should be reviled and suffer—it was whether the program of God was moving forward in the changing aspects of life.

Jesus Himself is our great example. With Him all other things were insignificant compared with the ongoing of the kingdom. He stedfastly set His face towards Jerusalem. The changes that He instituted concerned the kingdom of God. They were deeply religious. They were changes that enable us to get into closer harmony with the Father.

The church of Christ to-day may feel badly about the adjustments being made in the changing order. They may cause the saints of God to weep and feel despondent and hopeless about it all. But the world is not going to be bettered in that way. When Jesus walked among those Palestinian cities and villages, there were pathos and tragedy enough to make the Master weep. His method of dealing with those conditions was not to bewail them, but to hurl Himself headlong into the vortex and attempt to direct the stream of life into channels that would flow out to bless mankind.

And that is the challenge that comes to the church to-day. The needful thing on the part of every Christian is to reach that which begets a conviction that change is good and that its fundamental character is religious. A rough, worthless-looking stone picked up on the African field was sold by a native for a few

The Church and the Changing Order

pence. But oh, had he but known! In the hands of one who knew how to polish it, the stone became a beautiful diamond. So the church to-day can take the rough, uncouth things of life and make of them instruments that will bless the race and bring the kingdom of God nearer. This will be possible only when the followers of the Master will believe that all things are potentially good where the kingdom of God is concerned.

The church must follow its Master, for much needs to be done. It is the only institution left here by the Christ to carry on the work of making the world a place where the will of God shall be done even as it is done in heaven. And the task is far from being complete.

The story is told that when Admiral Dewey was nearing Manila Bay with his speeding squadron, one of his officers came to him with the information that there were mines near. But it is said that Dewey simply gave the order to "steam ahead!" Again the news was brought that the ships were in even more danger now, they were entering the mine-fields, but again the commander simply gave the order to "steam ahead!" And on they went with no thought other than that they had a duty to perform, and to-day the world honors those men who, led by the gallant Dewey, did their duty.

If the church of Jesus Christ were to pause and listen to-day for a command that might come from its great Leader, I believe that the only word that we would hear in this world of change would be the command to "steam ahead" until the task of winning the whole wide world has been completed.

VII.

“THINE ORDINANCES ARE GOOD”

BY LEE M. MOORE.

“Turn away my reproach whereof I am afraid; for thine ordinances are good.”—Ps. 119: 39.

GOD has always dealt with His people by ordinances—that is, authoritative rules—for how would they know what to do if He did not command them? The will of the Lord is revealed to man, from Adam to Christ, through commands. Thus the law of Moses, supplemented by the prophets, contained the ordinances of God to the Israelites.

Our text says the ordinances of God are good. Most assuredly the Psalmist refers to the Mosaic law. But in a larger sense all the ordinances of God must be good for their specific purposes, or He would not have given them. So we may take an Old Testament passage as a text for a New Testament message, and still not do violence to the Scriptures.

We have heard and read much of the ordinances of the church of Christ. We rarely hear or speak of them without using the limiting adjective “two.” Now, it is my purpose to show forth, not the two ordinances of the church of Christ, but the *four*. Two are inadequate. Incidentally they are the middle two of the four. The New Testament clearly teaches that there are four ordinances, and they are necessary

"Thine Ordinances Are Good"

for the full development of the kingdom of heaven and the individual Christian life. Each one has its specific purpose to fulfill and the four cover the whole realm of faith and practice.

First, preaching the gospel; for the propagation of the faith. Second, baptism; for the remission of one's sins and the putting on of Christ and becoming a new person. Third, the Lord's Supper; an aid to keep faith alive in the heart. Fourth, love; the badge of discipleship to show the world the working of the gospel. These four, without a doubt, cover the realm of the Christian's life and conduct.

Now, we can not pass over what some call an ordinance of the Lord; that is, "foot-washing." There are those who insist persistently that this is an ordinance to be kept. There is no gainsaying the fact that the Lord said, "Ye also ought to wash one another's feet." But there are many things we ought to do that are not commands at all. A congregation ought to have a minister, a janitor, musical instruments and song-books, but there is no command anywhere concerning them.

To get back to the point in question—do we find any apostolic teaching and practice enjoining foot-washing as a divine and perpetual ordinance? The church throughout the ages has not held or taught it to be such. God has a purpose back of His ordinances. What would be His purpose back of foot-washing—humility? Well, this is found more beautifully and more imperatively set forth in the command of love. If there is any doubt about this, just read the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians. There is no need for this extra observance, and history and the New

Testament bear testimony that it is not an ordinance kept up by the church. The Book of Acts makes no mention of it. The climate and custom made the practice common among the Jews, but there was no religious significance to it, as there would have been had Jesus given it as a command to be perpetuated.

The first ordinance of the Lord and the church is the command to preach the gospel. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel," are very familiar words to our people. This is for the preservation and perpetuation of the church of the living Christ. Our Christian system is built on faith. We are saved by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8). "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Again: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" If men are to learn of Christ and salvation, they must be told. If the knowledge of salvation is to prevail, it must be preached in all generations to all the people. The church can not recruit from its own ranks without preaching, so how can it recruit from the world without it? The church perpetuates itself in the world. God intended it to do so. When the church forsakes Christ's ordinance of preaching, her years of life are limited. With all authority in heaven and on earth Christ delegated His disciples to preach the gospel to the whole creation.

What is the gospel to be preached? Paul says, "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" The gospel is the power of God unto salvation; the object

"Thine Ordinances Are Good"

of our faith that saves; the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord. "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; . . . we are of all men most miserable." The gospel of Jesus Christ is not His apparent ancestry, the virgin birth, the Apostles' Creed or anything except that which the New Testament declares it to be. It is evidence of the judgment day. It is the promise of the return of the Lord. The gospel is simple. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." "For the word of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God." And if any one "should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema." Paul most assuredly preached the gospel of the resurrection of Christ, and he himself says: "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." There are a great many things parading as the true gospel, but God in His word makes it plain just what the gospel is. Many things may be preached, but the gospel must be preached. The layman as well as the minister is an ambassador of God. The ordinances of the church have to do with all the people, and not with any single class. If we could only see the necessity for the gospel. Principal A. E. Garvie said: "The world will never be saved by hearing the preacher read a literary essay every week." God's command is, "Preach the gospel." He commands and we must obey.

When the gospel is preached there will be no ignorance of it. It will be understood by those who hear, and the more it is preached the larger the num-

ber who will hear. God works through men. The commission was given to men, and men must obey it. A church without the gospel is a church without a vital message. The only logical reason for the church is the fact of its vital message to the world. It must be preached in sincerity, in humility, in love, in the very spirit of Christ himself. Some may mock, some may wish to hear it again, but some will believe and tell it to others. For self-preservation and perpetuation this ordinance of the Lord must be kept. We must not be "ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." If the world is to be saved, the gospel of salvation must be preached. To fail is disobedience to God.

The second ordinance of Christ and His church is baptism. This is the logical order. In importance all four ordinances are about equal. There has never been any doubt about baptism being an ordinance of the church. A great many controversies have arisen about its action and meaning, but it has always been an ordinance in the church of Jesus Christ.

Just before Christ began His ministry He was baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River, becoming a personal example. He commanded His disciples to baptize believers. When we study the Book of Acts we find that they who believed were baptized, even some men who had been baptized with the "baptism of John."

The ordinance of baptism has deep spiritual meaning. It is the initiatory rite into Christ and His church. We put on Christ in baptism. Jesus died, was buried and arose from the grave. The Christian is a new creature, born again. The old man must die and

"Thine Ordinances Are Good"

a new man arise. So in Rom. 6:4 we read: "We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life." The first group of ten verses in this sixth chapter of the Book of Romans is the finest exposition of the ordinance of baptism to be found anywhere. It clearly shows baptism to be immersion. It is Scriptural, and therefore can be accepted by all.

A man shows his faith in Christ and the power of God by obeying Him in baptism. According to the Old and New Testaments, there is no faith without works. Does one believe that Christ cleanses from sin? He then is baptized, for baptism is for the remission of sins. "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins," said Peter on the day of Pentecost, when the multitude asked what to do to be saved. Peter teaches more concerning this in the third chapter of his first Epistle, where he says, "... which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism." So we see that baptism has much to do with our salvation as well as being an ordinance of Christ and His church.

Then, too, we find that baptism is necessary in order to receive the Spirit of God. The Spirit was given to none without baptism except in the case of Cornelius, in the tenth chapter of Acts. But if one will read this carefully he will find the explanation of it in Peter. On the day of Pentecost Peter said the gift of the Holy Spirit was contingent upon one being baptized. Peter was not the only one who taught such. In the nineteenth chapter of Acts we find Paul at Ephesus baptizing some men into Christ, and laying his hands upon

them that they might receive the Spirit. Before this they had been baptized with John's baptism of repentance, but to receive the Spirit they must first be baptized into Christ. Even Paul himself had to "arise, and be baptized," and wash away his sins, that he might receive the Spirit of God. The old man must be put off that the new man, Christ, may be put on. Man must be born again in order to enter the kingdom of heaven.

So we have the ordinance of Christ uniting us with Him through baptism. It is not a matter for us to question. It is our part to obey. Christ became obedient even unto death, that we might live, and we must be obedient unto Him if we are to have the blessing of the life He offers to us. Thus this ordinance is for the purpose of making us new creatures in Christ, with sins forgiven and filled with His Spirit.

The third ordinance of Jesus Christ is the Lord's Supper. Here, again, the Christian world has unity, at least in accepting this as an ordinance, though differing somewhat in the keeping of it and in its interpretation.

The Jews for hundreds of years had been keeping the Passover Supper once a year in Jerusalem. It was purely Jewish, commemorating the passing over of the angel of death in Egypt and the passing over the Red Sea from bondage to freedom. Just before His death Jesus kept the Supper with His apostles in an upper room in Jerusalem. After the Supper He took bread and blessed and brake it, and gave to His disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is my body. And he took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the covenant,

"Thine Ordinances Are Good"

which is poured out for many unto the remission of sins." "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come." Thus the Lord's Supper was instituted on the night in which He was betrayed, and the command was given to keep it.

Now, what is the purpose of such an ordinance? The gospel is the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Lord's Supper commemorates the gospel. It was for the purpose of keeping their faith ever before them. As long as they were obedient in keeping the Supper they could not forget the gospel message. Their faith would continually be strengthened and their spiritual lives nourished. This ordinance is for the aid of the believer. It was a great blessing in the apostolic day, and it is such to-day to those who keep it. Not so long ago fifty men in a large Presbyterian church in New York City petitioned their minister to arrange to keep the Lord's Supper every week as a part of the worship. They felt the need of such observance of the ordinance.

Jesus' teaching concerning this ordinance is clear cut. Some time before His death He said: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have not life in yourselves." On the betrayal night He explained these words in giving the Lord's Supper. The follower of Christ must be linked with Christ. The foundation of Christianity is the resurrection of Christ. "If Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain." He was raised. Our Lord's Supper brings the fact to our mind again and again. The foundation of our faith must never be forgotten. It is as sure as Christ.

Now, since the Lord's Supper is so important and deeply spiritual, is there any wonder that the early disciples kept it every Lord's Day? It was the very heart of the gospel and the ground of their hope. When they met together on the first day of the week the primary purpose was "to break bread." The center of the worship was the Lord's Supper. Many false stories originated among the pagans concerning the Supper, and persecution followed, but it did not stop the faithful disciples in the worship of their Lord. It made possible the strength to withstand the assaults of the heathen world and to arise conquerors or die martyrs. The great heart of God knew the need of man and supplied it.

Our modern faith is the same as that of the apostles. The hope of our salvation is the same as theirs. We need the Lord's Supper in our worship for our spiritual well-being, even though it were not a command. But it is a command, and we must obey God rather than men. Not only does the keeping of the Lord's Supper aid our faith, but it also shows it forth to the world. When we keep the Supper we show to the world our faith in the gospel. "As oft as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come." The Lord has not yet returned, so it is binding upon Christians to keep His Supper, and there is blessing in so doing.

The fourth ordinance of Christ and His church is love. This is the ordinance that is hardest of all to keep. It is truly an ordinance the same as baptism and the Lord's Supper, and Christ emphasized it more than He did either of them. "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another, even as I

"Thine Ordinances Are Good"

have loved you." There is not a more clear-cut statement in the New Testament than this, and Jesus meant it. How it has been neglected is to be seen on every hand.

The purpose of this great commandment is given unto us in the words of Christ. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." The keeping of this is seen by the world. Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and most of the preaching, take place in the church building. Love is in the world. The world must be brought to Christ. How is the world to know who are Christians? We ought not to go about shouting that we have been baptized. The world would not understand it. In the early church the ordinance was kept, and the common saying among the pagans was, "Behold, how these Christians love one another." This is never heard to-day, but the opposite often is.

The New Testament teaches that baptism, being the "answer of a good conscience" to God's searching inquiries, "doth now save you," "through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." After your baptism, you "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," by the help of God, "who worketh in you." God's children are "partakers of the divine nature," epistles "read of all men."

God works in the world through men. He left the whole program of His church in the hands of men, and it has been there ever since. There is no way a man can serve God without serving his fellow-men. God is blessed or cursed by our treatment of His children. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, cannot love God whom he hath not seen."

There is no hatred as strong as that of two Christian brothers. Forgiving and forgetting seem to come the hardest to Christians. The keeping of this ordinance is woefully lame, and the result is apparent.

The world knows a Christian, not by his profession, but by his life. Love has not been recognized as an ordinance, but the Lord so ordained. The Lord commands and we must obey. It is reasonable. "If God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." This is the only ordinance that is lasting. Preaching will some day be done away with, for all will have heard. Baptism will cease, for there will be none to be baptized. The Lord's Supper will no longer be kept, for the Lord will return and the Supper will not need to be kept, for He will be present. But love is infinite and abides forever. It has the largest share in the present Christian life, and it makes for an abundant entrance into the kingdom above and remains with us.

The world's great need to-day is the practice of the ordinance of love. The burden of preaching should be on this, as there are few non-Christians in the average congregation in America in comparison with the number of Christians present. A hymn-writer has put the plea to music:

"Do you know the world is dying
For a little bit of love?
Everywhere you hear them crying
For a little bit of love,
For the love that rights the wrong,
Changes sorrow into song.
They have waited, oh, so long,
For a little bit of love."

Brethren, this ordinance can not be neglected if we are to be in harmony with the Christ of God

"Thine Ordinances Are Good"

who through love saved us. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; and so shall ye be my disciples." Love is the fulfillment of the law. Where the love of Christ is, there is peace.

What have we left out in the purpose and meaning and work of the church of the living Christ? Do not these four ordinances cover the whole field? I believe they do. The Lord clearly sets them forth as ordinances and gives the purpose back of them. In His wisdom He ordained them, and we, in our reasonableness, can accept and use them to the glory of God and the saving of our souls as well as making our lives a blessing and attaining unto some degree of perfectness.

A church or a life without these commands of Christ is one lacking in the essentials that Christ gave to the church, and it can not measure up to the fullness of Christ. We must remember at all times that the church is His body, and we are members of Him. His wisdom is far above ours, and happy is the man who realizes it. How can a church exist and grow and be powerful without the preaching of the gospel? How can one put on Christ without being buried with Him in the likeness of His burial and resurrection? How shall the church and her members keep and strengthen faith without the Lord's Supper? How shall the world know and God be glorified without the practice of love? He hath done all things well. "Thine ordinances are good, O Lord." "Not my will, but thine, be done."

VIII.

FINDING GOD

BY FRANK DONALDSON.

"As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?"—Ps. 42: 1, 2.

IT is a strange thing to be alive! If you have ever dreamed of falling, falling, falling, yet never lighting, and you awoke with the sinking sensation still persisting, then you can easily catch the feeling of strangeness that comes when the ordinary is slightly cast out of focus and a partial gleam of unreality is cast over all that we so easily take for granted. There seems to be no apparent and fundamental reason for our being. It is a strange thing to feel and to know. Strange with a sense of unreality and with a sinking sensation as in the dream of falling.

It is easily conceivable that our systems in space might have existed and never have been inhabited by sentient beings—no human voyagers down the eons of duration. But it is even as startling that the universe ever came to be—cycling orbs and illimitable space! Why this dull, hard matter and rampant energy? It is far easier to think blank nothingness—empty space—than to think of all these extraordinary things of being and existence.

Finding God

The human spirit can and does have these sensations and thoughts arising from a variety of causes. But it is under the pressure of these thoughts that the spirit gasps and the unquenchable longings of man emerge. With this all-pervasive feeling of strangeness overcasting all, man faints for an explanation—some sure foundation of hope and trust, some penetrating insight into meanings and values. This spirit is dominant to-day. Intellectual skepticism and moral despair give us pause, and we stagger beneath the burden of it all.

“As the hart panteth after the water brooks,” so we long for the luminous, larger meaning. But no ready-made answer has ever been found for this insistent cry of man when he is stripped down to the naked reality and his natural potentialities insurgently make demands.

The escape from this undesirable condition must be on the basis of a world-view of some sort. All our thoughts, to be true, must be modified by one fundamental consideration, which is the first known and the latest felt of all facts. This world is a world of strife and jeopardy characterized by pain! Our first cry was the cry of pain as the doctor forced breath into us. Our last act will be the struggling gasp for breath. Life is good, but life is real, and these feelings of dread are pressed in upon us by a universe. Nature by violence crushes our bones and tears our flesh, and by divers maladies casts us on a bed of feverish unrest and death. We ourselves do that which we ought never to have done—the thing which is an unmitigated loss. Then, we are full of sorrow! The irrational is abroad in the universe, and no philosoph-

ical abstraction or religious platitude can rob that darkness of its sooty blackness and make it light.

Our sense of the tragic element in life is heightened because we are no strangers to the good and the rational. With our tenderest sensibilities crashed in upon, and with our highest aspirations crushed, we bleed because we have blood, and quiver because we have nerves. Oh, the gashing pain and doleful sorrow we endure because we are constituted to desire the good and the true and the beautiful. Our constitution is such that the faint traceries are there in sufficient amount to cause us to yearn, but never strong enough to lead to full-orbed accomplishment and realization.

These are elements in the mind of those who know they must find God or perish. For by reason of our constitution, if we can find God and give our trust to Him, we are willing and able to stand and endure, though we may never fathom all intellectual, moral and spiritual mysteries. We accept, as fundamental to our world-view, the nature of the God we know—so to order our lives for our short day and trust to Him the realization of the ultimate issues of a universe. By virtue of His being God, we do so trust Him. We are at home in the universe because we know the Creator of the universe. But, if we must await the solution of all problems, we are undone and are very miserable. Religion claims for itself a unique and valid task.

When to our sense of frustration caused by sin and pain, there comes, also, this feeling of strangeness in the universe, to press down more piercingly the crown of thorns—mocking our sense of kinship to the divine—we stand as fellows with Jesus as He cries, "My

Finding God

God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" for, "as the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." We were made for Thee and our hearts are restless till they find rest in Thee. We long for God as a fainting, weary pilgrim in a parched and dreary land longs for the deep pools of cooling water.

We must find our God if God there be. No wayfarer's tale can assure us—we must know our God. No words of fire from sacred page will suffice. To have meaning, not alone must the Psalmist and prophet know God, but every sincere worshiper in the temple service. How unreal the implication if only the apostles knew God in reality, and not also the three thousand on the day of Pentecost. How futile to follow the fathers of the Restoration in the discarded vagaries of the English rationalism. We must, out of struggle and strain, find God. Age-old voices are lost in the din of the present. We must know! It is admitted to-day that there is no sure logical demonstration of the existence of God. If the Kantian reduction of the classical argument be not as complete as he felt it was, still it teaches us that our hopes in this world can not depend on a syllogism. We must know, and that by a unique and personal experience that certifies to us the reality of the object of our hope.

This personal experience is, in a measure, and can be more fully, the experience of all men. Not from the viewpoint of scholastic speculations on mysticism, but from that of our common human experiences. Not without mystery, but with certainty. There is but one explanation, I believe, of the universal

and varied religious phenomena in our race, and that is that God is immediately perceived in religious experience. Whether we call it spiritual perception, intuition, realization or evaluation does not matter as long as the fact is assured. If this be true, then it is one of the most stupendous and startling facts in the world when it is consciously realized. By the right religious adjustment, we come to know Him more and more. And certainty grows with faith's construction.

Here are some facts that indicate the truth of this concept. All men everywhere have prayed. The low-browed savage kneels and prays to "life-in-tree" that is more than wood, to "spirit-in-storm" that is more than wind, to the ancestor that is more than mortal, to power that is more than of the earth. Some have felt by dim intuition the one Presence above the presences—the Supreme Being of the primitives.

We of this "advanced" age also, if we but drop to our knees, can not but speak to the Presence we know to be there. We speak in words to be understood by the Supreme Intelligence.

I, too, have known the reality of this perception of the Unseen. Harassed by intellectual doubts, embittered by moral struggle, for me the comfortable face of God's solid universe fled away. In misery and agony, I knelt and called, "Is there a God?" I cried, "Are you there, God?" And I knew, as the call was uttered, that He was there to hear. In truth I learned, "Be still, and know that I am God." My heart, that had panted for God, as a hart after the water brooks, found refreshment in His presence.

Those who, in despair of victory and fear of moral defeat, have cast themselves down before that Presence

Finding God

asking for help, and have felt the inrush of spiritual reinforcement, have known Him as there.

The mystic's steadfast assurance is not to be despised, although his deductions are incorrect. The pure and sincere have assured us of God's presence in their lives, and increasingly this indwelling has been in them. Prophet and priest have known.

I talked not long since with an ignorant river-hand who, while denying the claim of organized religion upon him, hastened to assure me: "Not that I'm denying the good Man to be there [pointing up], for I know He is, but —." Also I talked to an old farmer of strait-laced morality, who opposed all churches, but hastened to say: "I know the 'Good'un' is—no man can take that away from me, but —." Here is the primitive belief in the existence of God. They have it as the primitive had.

This assurance of the existence of God is the common possession of all men, and I believe, for the reason that God is immediately perceived in our religious experience. No other fact will so explain the universal and varied religious phenomena of our race. The truth is not that we do not have the assurance of God, but that we have expected it to be somewhat else and have failed to realize it as being our possession. The effort to explain our belief in God by the classical or other logical arguments is a second moment in our assurance. The real basis is this primitive perception to which we have not always given its full value. In a world of stress and strain in which irrationality is abroad, we have made our mistakes.

God is realized as present when we consciously attend to Him. His imminence is more than mere

energy. God is everywhere present, but we come more intimately into His presence when we consciously realize that by attending to Him, we perceive Him. The emotion we experience is not God, but the result of the realization of His presence. The act of perception, if God be Spirit, would be somewhat of the order as when a thought comes to us by mental telepathy. It is as when we are aware of mental activity as in contrast to awareness of content. It is the immediate perception of the presence of a spirit which is more ultimate than thought or emotion.

We are so unaccustomed to the immediate perception of spirit that we fail to recognize it. We know bodies, and we expect that some weighty somewhat—a brickbat sort of thing—will crash in upon us when we become aware. We usually infer spirit from a bodily complex. But if we are spirit, and there are spirits, why may we not immediately know them? Surely something close to this is true in mental telepathy. If we are mind, and God is mind (or more), why can He not, in some way, come to us? He does! Not by overt word or thought (unless to prophet or apostle), but by the universal insistence that He is. The contact of our spirit with His spirit is the deep and solemn realization of the presence of the Almighty. We can not deny Him. We may doubt the church, current religion and theology, but we can not deny the presence of almighty God when we concentrate and attend to Him. Try and see! You may know for yourself. This fact can explain the universal and varied phenomena of religion in our race.

It does not suffice to discredit all this to call it superstition, for the insistent question that follows

Finding God

after is, "Why the superstition?" What is the cause of a universal manifestation in our humanity? It is a question of what the universe is doing with us, not a question of a few individual vagaries. Neither can the beliefs be dismissed by the concept that the whole range of experience in this matter is within the devotee, for this leans too far from a normal psychology. Nor will the calling of religion a modified reflex waive their value aside, for then there are too many modified reflexes for religion alone to be discredited by the terms, and the worth of the individual is imperiled by the assumption.

We must not fail to pay attention to the proper questions that arise. Why has Deity been so variously and so often wrongly conceived? Why can the agnostic deny the existence of God? The primary consideration in answer to these questions is, I believe, that this is a world of stress and strain in which the irrational is abroad and that the right appreciation of Deity is a moral and spiritual achievement. Three considerations serve to explain in the main the mistakes. First, any perception is modified by the constitution of the one who perceives. We are unable, by our make-up, properly to realize God. We do not adequately perceive a fellow-being. Second, man has tended to project himself in religious aspirations. For this reason we have had gods of power, of theft, of lust. Third, our immature intellect has posited wrong conceptions of Deity. The whole of man has been concerned in his religious experience—all of his faculties. In all this, not alone the divine within him, but also that which is not divine, has been active. The pattern of God's man has been

in men, but the filled-in design is man's moral and spiritual achievement based on a moral choice arising from a reaction to revelation. We have had to perceive God in our total environment, but the total environment is God plus, and part, at least, of the plus is anti-God with an unknown amount of the unclassified. How beautiful to find God in the fragrant rose, but what of the noxious nightshade?

Fundamental to the above considerations, and basic to the process of achievement, is the activist view of faith as described in the Epistle to the Hebrews. "Faith is the giving substance to things hoped for, the test of things unseen." Surely the "things hoped for" come from the pattern of the divine within us, and the hoping is our native reaching out for God, which indicates what should be the quality of the thing to be found true or untrue, and thus is the basis of moral and spiritual decisions. "The giving substance to" indicates the moral and spiritual achievement growing from the decision, reached on the basis of things hoped for, with moral and spiritual choices having been made. "The test of the unseen" is verification in discovery, based on the test that arises in moral choices. We test when we experiment. We experiment on the basis of a moral and spiritual desire. We secure evidence in the unseen by finding the things hoped for to be true. We know!

The definition then ceases to be a theological abstraction or club, and becomes a psychological description and a spiritual program. The matter of a moral choice is introduced and responsibility is placed on us for our spiritual development. Faith, then, is a valid basis of salvation. Imputed righteous-

Finding God

ness is based upon psychologically real, moral and spiritual potentialities which inhere in faith through the decision to give substance to things hoped for in the process of spiritual exploration and discovery. "By grace are ye saved through faith." Justification is based upon the worth of moral decisions in psychologically real elements. We venture with and for God, and the worth and possibilities of our lives are revealed. The first principles of the gospel which our fathers restored to preaching are still God's way of lifting souls to Himself.

To bring these sayings to bear on our problem, can we not say that faith in this instance is finding a thing true when it is assented to, though it can be denied when we refuse to assent to it? It is an act of spiritual perception based on a moral choice. The "assenting" or "refusing" is the moral and spiritual test. Superstition would be the assenting to something as existing which is non-existent. God is the "thing hoped for." The discovery of the reality of God would be the "test of the unseen." "The giving substance to" would be the spiritual and moral development in our lives on the basis of the discovery of God which makes Him more and more real to us. It is God's Holy Spirit drawing out the divine in us to the fullness of a complete life in a world of stress and strain, in which the irrational and sin are abroad, where only by a moral and spiritual effort do we come to know Him. The fact of a moral choice is as basic and mysterious in life as the categorical imperative. Say not the Scriptures, "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself"? The saint

knows more of God than the novice, and that not alone from intellectual disciplines.

We can always deny the most self-evident propositions, we can refuse to see the good in our fellows, we can say that we have no sense of the presence of God within ourselves. We can, but whether or not we do, is ultimately a moral and spiritual choice. "Faith" makes us responsible for our choices and our perceptions. Actually, "by grace are ye saved through faith"! Through the faith that is impelled by the good within us to reach out into the dim unknown, the realm of doubt, the field of the spiritual, or the life of Christ, and by virtue of a moral choice find God, and the true, the good and the beautiful, to be existent and to claim these for the seeker. Jesus, in being psychologically necessary, becomes absolutely necessary.

In Jesus, by faith, we know not only that God is, but what God is. As God revealing Himself, we know not only God, but our eternal duty—the things to which we must give substance in our partial lives. We discover the divine until we stand in the fullness of the stature of Christ Jesus, which is God's enduring and good purpose in the earth. As a faithful high priest He leads us into the very presence of God, and the middle wall of partition of ignorance, sin and doubt is broken down as we find the test of the unseen and hoped for verified in Jesus Himself. We test and we find verification. We hope for and find fulfillment.

For "Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. And he that beholdeth me beholdeth him that sent me. I am come a light into the world, that whosoever

Finding God

believeth on me may not abide in the darkness. And if any man hear my sayings, and keep them not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I spake not from myself; but the Father that sent me, he hath given me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life eternal; the things therefore which I speak, even as the Father hath said unto me, so I speak."

The acceptance or rejection of Jesus is ultimately a moral decision, and not primarily an intellectual one, other than as the intellectual problems gather moral significances. For, "the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day." So John can say of the faith that gives substance to divine aspirations and validates the religious life. "And this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith. And who is he that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in him: . . . And the witness is this, that God gave unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life" (1 John 5).

In a world of stress and strain characterized by pain, where irrationality and sin are abroad, does your heart pant for God as the hart panteth after the water brooks? Will you accept Christ as the Master of your life, the Messiah of your hopes? The choice is yours. Your answer will reveal what sort of man you are!

Bethany College Sermons

Have you the moral fiber to acclaim Christ your hope? In all the beauty of His being, He offers you life in Himself. No man can take away from you the responsibility of the choice of this moment. The choice is yours, for—

“To every man there openeth
A way, and ways, and a way;
The high soul climbs the high way,
And the low soul gropes the low;
And in between, on the misty flats,
The rest drift to and fro.

“To every man there openeth
A high way and a low,
And every man decideth
Which way his soul shall go.”

IX.

FAIRNESS IN PREJUDICE

BY HERMAN M. PATTON.

"Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see."—John 1: 45, 46.

INTRODUCTION.

PREJUDICE against Christ is to-day a formidable foe to the work of the church. For reinforcements it relies on the host of sophistries and doubts so numerous in this age of transition. But prejudice is not a new obstacle to discipleship; it has been a problem since Christ inaugurated His ministry. Not all the men who became His apostles "straightway left their nets and followed him"; not all yielded their lives without question. In some the Master found bulwarks of prejudice erected against Him.

The story of the conversion of one such man is given to us by John in the last seven verses of the first chapter of his Gospel. The man is Nathanael—at first decidedly prejudiced against Christ, but finally won over to an unquestioning faith. Nowhere in the entire New Testament can there be found a finer example of the way doubt will flee before faith in the heart of one who is willing to allow Christ a reasonable chance

in his life. Let us follow Nathanael's experience, appropriating for ourselves the lessons brought out. The passage falls naturally into five divisions: I. Nathanael Hears of Jesus. II. Nathanael Doubts Jesus. III. Nathanael Goes to Jesus. IV. Nathanael Believes in Jesus. V. Nathanael Is Rewarded by Jesus. We shall examine them in the order mentioned.

I. NATHANAEL HEARS OF JESUS.

The curtain goes up on the first scene of our drama of conversion. In describing for us how Nathanael is won for Christ, John begins with the first important step. Philip has come to announce to his friend a glorious discovery, "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." The greatest story human lips can recount.

Significant it is that the first glimpse which the gospel writer gives us of Nathanael's conversion is of him as he hears the story of Christ. Without the antecedent setting forth of the facts contained in this story, there can be no true case of conversion. Centuries ago the apostle Paul expressed the formula which must be used to combine an unsaved soul with faith and produce a believer: "How then shall they call on him whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" The principle involved in this passage runs through the New Testament. Without exception, every conversion recorded there follows the presentation of the gospel story. It is only after Peter has proclaimed the living Messiah that the multitude on the day of

Fairness in Prejudice

Pentecost opens the floodgates of its soul and cries out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" The eunuch sees not the necessity of baptism until after Philip has explained the prophecies concerning Christ.

While following the experience of Nathanael, we would be missing much were we to pass over the important part played by Philip. It takes no great power of imagination to picture these two men as close friends. We know with certainty that they are from neighboring towns, the former from Cana and the latter from Bethsaida. Men of Israel they are, in whose hearts the Messianic hope has found deep root, and in whose inherent national pride that hope has found nourishment. Often for hours at a time they must have sat discussing prophecies which related to the coming Prince of peace. Together their minds have dreamed of the day when His trumpet of war should sound against the power of Rome. One day Philip meets with the young carpenter's son of Nazareth, who calls him to discipleship. In some way that John does not explain to his readers, Philip sees in Jesus the long-expected Messiah. Eagerness lends wings to his feet as he hastens to tell Nathanael that the triumphal day has come.

As earnestly as did the Jews long to see "the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings," do men yearn for the coming of Christ into their lives. Station in society has no discriminating power here. Sometimes this longing lies unseen in the breast of him who holds it, but it is there. Very often it is unconsciously that the spirit of an unsaved man cries out: "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God; my soul

thirsteth for God, for the living God." When the water wells of what this world has to offer fail, then do men reach out for that "well of water springing up into everlasting life." Yet the ears of Christians many times are deaf to such cries. Having found the Messiah ourselves, we are content to lock His story in the vault of our hearts. Until followers of Christ are impelled by that enthusiasm which sends Philip running to Nathanael with the glad news, the kingdom can not advance as it should.

This man-to-man telling of the gospel story must have been intended by Christ as the principal method of carrying His name to the ends of the earth and making disciples of all the nations. His parable of the leaven was told evidently to impress upon His followers the importance of this method in the kingdom's work. S. D. Gordon has effectively set forth the thought in his description of a conversation which takes place between the risen Lord and one of the angels in heaven. Gordon pictures Gabriel as asking Christ, when he reached heaven, what recognition the world has given of His divine suffering for its sake. Christ replied that only a few in Palestine knew of it. Gabriel feels that the whole world should know, and he asks, "What is your plan, Master, for telling them of it?" Jesus replies: "I have asked Peter and James and John and Andrew, and a few others, to tell others, and those others to tell others, until the last man in the farthest circle has heard the story and felt the power of it." "But suppose they do not tell others, what then?" Gabriel asks. And Jesus answers quietly: "Gabriel, I haven't made other plans. I'm counting on them." Jesus can never reach men as rapidly as

Fairness in Prejudice

He should until every Christian realizes the responsibility of telling others the great gospel story. A few ministers and missionaries will never suffice to win the world.

Much could be said in criticism of how Christians have neglected the duty of personal evangelism, but here may I offer a tribute to those faithful heralds of the Master who have gone through the streets announcing Christ, the King. "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things." Some have told the story at the price of life itself, many more at the cost of fame, glory or wealth. In every tongue it has been told. Hearers from every nation and race have received its message. "But I say, Did they not hear? Yea, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." Man to man have they carried the news, even as Philip makes known his discovery to Nathanael.

II. NATHANAEL DOUBTS JESUS.

But Philip's announcement does not ignite the expected flame of joy in the heart of his friend. Philip must feel hurt and disappointed as the expression on Nathanael's face becomes cynical rather than radiant with hope. All the doubt which Nathanael's face pictures is expressed in his reply—a question, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" The experience of Philip is typical of that with which many personal workers must meet in dealing with doubters. Those who have not found Christ can not be expected to feel our joy. All that Christians can do is to let Christ speak for Himself and give the

Bethany College Sermons

simple invitation which Philip gives, "Come and see."

Many have falsely interpreted Nathanael's question, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" to signify that the village of Nazareth had a bad reputation because of its wickedness. Historians can find no cause, however, to condemn the Nazareth of that day on such grounds. It was not a seaport town, nor was it a commercial center. There is no reason to consider it more degenerate morally than the average small town of its time in Palestine.

Though this fact exonerates Nazareth, it does not remove the note of prejudice in Nathanael's query. He is decidedly prejudiced against Jesus, not because of the bad character of Christ's home town, but because it does not seem probable to him that a spot so near his own home could be so honored as to be the home of the Messiah. Three facts strengthen this prejudice in Nathanael's mind. In the first place, Nazareth is a secluded community, not located on any trade route, although in sight of one. A place so remote would not seem a likely home for the King of kings. In the second place, Nazareth has been of no importance in the national life of Israel. No great leader has ever been produced from the generations of its populace. In the third place, the town of Nazareth is not mentioned in the Old Testament. It has never been associated with any great event in Israel's history. Jerusalem, for centuries the religious center of Palestine, with centuries of glorious history behind her, would probably be the one to present the Messiah to the world. All of these facts help in bending the mind of Nathanael to believe that Philip has made a great mistake, and the Messiah is still to come.

Fairness in Prejudice

True to the definition of "prejudice," that of Philip's friend has been formed "beforehand and without due examination." He has not yet so much as seen Jesus of Nazareth. No process of reasoning has crystallized into his judgment of the carpenter's son. Nathanael's doubt has been bequeathed as a way of thinking handed down from his parents or developed from his childhood. So far he has not given Jesus a fair chance in his life. Much of the prejudice which men have against Christ and the church to-day is equally unreasonable. Preconceived judgment closes the door of the mind to truth. False doctrine has killed his thousands, but prejudice his ten thousands. To those whose minds are ruled by prejudice, Christ becomes an impostor or a mere man; the facts of the gospel, the invention of fanciful and fanatical minds; the commands of the gospel, needless burdens, and the promises of the gospel only probabilities.

At the time, Nathanael's prejudice must loom large in his thinking—"can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" But long years after that day, years after he had been won for the service of the Master, Nathanael, in moments of meditation, often must have recalled that question. At such times he must have laughed at the pettiness of his doubt. How trivial, how unfair, how insignificant, it must have seemed, now that he had come to know Christ. Yet men and women to-day are being kept from Jesus by doubts equally trivial and unfair.

Men are prejudiced against Christ because His church is weak and faltering. They do not see that, in spite of the fact that its leaders err at times, the church is now as ever the champion of righteousness.

Men are prejudiced against Christ because some nominal follower of His has trailed conversion vows in the dust. They would allow a few hypocrites to stand between themselves and the one and only Saviour. Men are prejudiced against Christ because of some bitter experience in life's past. One blurred sign-post turns them on the road which leads away from "the peace of God which passeth all understanding." These are just three ways in which men allow themselves to be prejudiced unreasonably against the Master, as does Nathanael on hearing Philip's story.

III. NATHANAEL GOES TO JESUS.

If the brief glimpse given us of Nathanael in John 1:46 were to end our acquaintance with him, the picture in our minds would be that of a bigoted, hard-shelled doubter, narrowed down in his thinking to the limits of prejudice. Instead, we know that Nathanael later climbs over the hedge which separates him from faith. He is not one to allow prejudice to keep him from understanding the truth. He stands out as a man hampered by doubt, but willing to receive the light. Nathanael accepts Philip's invitation to "come and see." It will be interesting to notice the factors which make him willing at least to go to Jesus in spite of his preconceived opinion.

In the first place, his friend Philip plays a most important role. Such cynicism as Nathanael shows would be enough to chill the ardor of the average soul-winner. His apparent equivocal attitude, however, in no way reduces Philip's faith in Jesus as the Messiah. Philip makes no attempt to apologize by word or atti-

tude for having represented Jesus of Nazareth so highly. There is no compromising in his bearing. Furthermore, he feels certain that Nathanael will share in his faith, if he can but see Jesus. It is this unquestioning faith in the Christ whom we represent that leads men to seek Him. The faith that does not shrink in an atmosphere of doubt, but merely says, "Come and see," wins men for the Master.

Not only does Philip maintain a constant faith, but he also demonstrates rare tact in dealing with a doubting friend. The indifferent attitude of Nathanael may discourage, but it does not unbalance him. Angry words do not burst from his lips, nor is resort made to argument, when his stand is questioned. Nothing will discount the work of a personal evangelist so much as an argumentative disposition. The would-be soul-winner who advances dressed like a Greek hoplite ready for battle, never attains victory. Seeing that an obstacle lies in the faith of his friend, Philip does not grow impatient, but quietly invites him to "come and see." Two important characteristics of the soul-winner, therefore, are exhibited by Philip, undimmed faith and tactfulness.

The second factor, which causes Nathanael to go to Jesus, now follows. Nathanael, as was Chappell's Thomas, is not proud of his doubts. He does not erect an altar and burn incense to them, nor does he wear his doubts as a phylactery on his forehead to be seen of others. The people are not few who are as proud of their doubts as a boy of his trick dog, demonstrating them at every opportunity. From their doubts they derive a feeling of intellectual aloofness. But no man is the richer because of his doubts, whether

they be social or spiritual. The man who doubts his wife suffers all the agony of Tartarus. If a man lacks faith in his associates at the office or on the street, life for him can not be more than drudgery. Nathanael is not proud of his doubts.

In the third place, as Chappell speaks of Thomas, Nathanael is reasonable about his doubts. A common tendency among the spiritually prejudiced is to curtain the mind against every beam of light. The books which they read are those of men who hold to and defend doubts similar to their own. Associates are selected from those who agree with them in the stand taken. They live continually in an environment that would strengthen rather than diminish doubt. No attempt is made to examine the other side. But not so with Nathanael. He may feel certain that the sun will not rise in the east, but he is determined to climb to the mountain's summit, look in that direction and see the beautiful sight, should it take place.

Nathanael, willing to exchange doubt for faith, goes to Jesus. The trip may seem in vain, but he would know for himself the wisdom or folly of faith in Jesus of Nazareth.

IV. NATHANAEL BELIEVES IN JESUS.

As Nathanael approaches Jesus he hears words of praise from the lips of the carpenter's son: "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." These first words of the Master leave an impression of wonder in his mind. Before seeing Jesus he asked a question of doubt; now, on a very brief acquaintance, his first question is one of amazement: "Whence knowest thou me?" Already there's a change. "Before

that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee," came the answer. Few were the words of reply, but sufficient to break down Nathanael's doubts and sweep away forever his flimsy prejudices.

What significance the fig-tree reference has for him is not given for us to know. Many believe that Nathanael had just returned from listening to the message of John the Baptist. Under the fig-tree he sat contemplating with varied emotions the Messiah's coming. The reply of Jesus to his question reveals to the doubter that the Man of Nazareth not only "saw him, but saw into him," understanding his innermost thoughts at the time. This simple demonstration of Christ's supernatural knowledge convinces him beyond doubt. Without hesitation he exclaims joyously: "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." In giving voice to the newborn faith, he addresses Christ with "the fullest Scriptural designation of the Messiah that he knows." There is nothing half-hearted about his faith, nothing lukewarm about his zeal. Where once grew a prejudice, now buds a beautiful faith.

Two instrumentalities had most to do in supplanting Nathanael's prejudice with faith—Nathanael and Christ. In every conversion the two factors operate—the human and the divine. Without one the other is powerless. It is a proverb that "no figure of speech can be made to go on all fours."

Nathanael does his part by going to Jesus. He places himself in a position where Christ can inspire faith. Much injury has been done to the Master's cause by the doctrine which teaches that the divine is the only factor of importance in conversion. Men

have been falsely taught that their only part is passive submission. Evidence of the Scriptures is abundant in proof of the fact that man has a part to play in his own salvation. Nowhere in the Old or New Testament does God promise to do anything for man without attaching some condition for man to meet. In the matter of conversion God's principle does not change. Salvation has well been spoken of as a transaction which requires two parties—God and man. The great question asked by the multitude on the day of Pentecost was, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" and they were told what to do in order to make effective what God had done. The Philippian jailor asked of Paul and Silas, "What must I do to be saved?" There is something that man can and must do. "God can open the blind eye or unstop the deaf ear or paint a lily-bell or form a dewdrop or create the trill of a bird song. He can open the gates of the morning without a creak of the hinges. He can set an atom swinging in the sunshine with all its rhythm and poetry, or He can direct the movements of a constellation, but he can not save any man against that man's will." Six hundred times we find the word "come" in the New Testament. "Each time it is a prayer from God to man." Though Nathanael's experience is not to be held up as a typical New Testament conversion, he sets an example for us in his willingness to do his part—he goes to Jesus.

The second element in changing Nathanael's prejudice into faith is supplied by Jesus. In Christ is the power to transform doubt into mighty faith. What mystical force emanated from the personality of Christ

to dispel all uncertainty from the minds of His followers, can not be described. We can but see its evidence. In addition to the Master's simple exhibition of supernatural knowledge, there must be something in the tone of His voice, the expression of His face, the look in His eye, the poise of His bearing that ignites in Nathanael's heart the fire of faith which Philip's words were powerless to strike.

Nathanael must be drawn by the same magnetism which some fishermen felt when, on the shore of the Sea of Galilee one day, the young man of Nazareth looked them in the eye and said, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." There was nothing of hesitancy in their response, even as no flaw of doubt mars Nathanael's confession of faith. The Pharisee, Nicodemus, felt its grip likewise and could say, "Rabbi, we know thou art a teacher come from God." And that magnetism so powerful in life transcends even death and time, for we to-day feel its power as did these men of old. No one goes to Christ sincerely and comes away empty of faith. But give Christ a fair chance in one's life and faith at once germinates and grows. There is in Christ every argument to meet every doubt. If a man with a doubt so intense as that of Thomas could receive proof enough to cry "My Lord and my God," every earnest doubter may find the same firm conviction.

V. NATHANAEL IS REWARDED BY JESUS.

A great change has come over Nathanael since first we saw him. Our first glimpse is of a man listening to the story of the Messiah with a mind bent by prejudice. Then we see him, in spite of his doubts, go to

see Jesus. Amazed at the first words of Jesus, wonder springs up and changes quickly to a mighty faith. Dropping his former prejudice as a traveler might drop his pack, he exclaims, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." The last verse of the passage concludes the story and tells us that, because of what faith Nathanael has shown, he hereafter "shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

Nathanael has not found it necessary to undergo any agonizing mental experience to arrive at faith. He just believes Christ in a very simple way, yet, because of that childlike faith, Jesus promises him a "greater basis for his faith and consequently a loftier faith." "Nathanael has believed because of a miracle of knowledge which could be appreciated by himself alone; he is hereafter to witness miracles of power which could be appreciated by all." He follows what light he has and is rewarded with the brightness of day.

Faith in Christ does not always step full-formed from the head of a great spiritual experience. Faith many times begins as a grain of mustard seed, but "when it is grown, it is greater than the herbs and becometh a tree." If one becomes as a little child in the simplicity of his faith, growth will follow until maturity is reached. At first the disciples themselves did not have complete faith in Christ, as is evidenced by their often expressed misconceptions of His nature and mission. But each day of their association with Him found that faith stronger, and finally it was made complete. All that is required is that men make a beginning, regardless of how

Fairness in Prejudice

simple, and Christ will supply the ever-broadening foundation for a more lofty faith. "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know."

Horace Bushnell, while a student at Yale, felt that he was in the way of a great revival that was sweeping through the university. He did not want to stand in the way of the revival, and yet he was an unbeliever. He did not feel that he could come out on the side of Christ because he did not believe in Christ. "What then do you believe?" a voice within him seemed to ask. "I believe there is an absolute difference between right and wrong," was the answer. "Have you ever put yourself on the side of the right to follow it regardless of consequences?" was the next question. "I have not," he answered, "but I will." So Horace Bushnell knelt there in his room and dedicated himself to the service of right. And what a wonderful change came over his life. After he had been a preacher for the Master in Hartford, Conn., for forty-seven years, he said, "Better than I know any man in Hartford I know Jesus Christ."

Bushnell did not have much of a faith to begin with, but it grew. Nathanael did not have much, but he followed what light was his and found the fullness of the sun.

CONCLUSION.

In spite of his prejudice, Nathanael was willing to be reasonable with Christ. His mind was open to the truth; he was willing to be convinced; his love for truth was greater than his love for doubt. A man who comes to Jesus in that attitude before long will cry out, "Thou art the Son of God; thou art the King

Bethany College Sermons

of Israel." Many who read these pages may be separated from Christ by the barrier of some prejudice. But give Him a fair chance in your life and "doubts will flee away" never to return. To you the invitation is extended, "Come and see."

X.

ONE-WAY STREETS

(A BACCALAUREATE SERMON.)

BY A. F. HANES.

TEXT: "I shall go the way whence I shall not return."—
Job 16: 22.

IN this age of congested traffic, we are accustomed to see in almost every city through which we pass a sign bearing the words, "One-way Street," and an arrow points the direction in which the tourists must go.

Often we are inconvenienced, and sometimes annoyed, when we become aware of the fact that we are traveling in the opposite direction from which we desire to go. The traffic cop says, "Move on;" the sign at the corner says "No right turn," and we are compelled to move along with the crowd, conscious all the while that every block must be duplicated in the return, before we are able to renew our journey from the point of departure.

The redeeming feature in all this is the fact that we have another chance. The inconvenience may have been considerable; the time wasted may be irretrievable; but aside from this there is no great loss, and, in a short time, we are able to make the necessary adjustments, and to be on our way again.

At this time I purpose to speak to you concerning "One-way Streets," and the text for the message is to be found in Job 16:22: "I shall go the way whence I shall not return." The tragic difference in this journey from the experience I have just related is that whereas in the one it is possible to return to the point of departure by some circuitous route, in the other—the journey of life—no such opportunity is granted. If in one we make a mistake along the way, it is possible to return and rectify it; in the other, there is no possibility of our return, for "we shall not pass this way again."

"BUT ONCE."

"We go this way but once, O friend of mine;
So, why not make the journey well worth while,
Giving to those who travel with us
A helping hand, a word of cheer, a smile?
We go this way but once; ah! never more
Can we go back along the self-same way;
To get more out of life, undo the wrongs,
Or speak love's words we knew, but did not say.
We go this way but once; then, let us make
The road we travel blossomy and sweet
With helpful, kindly deeds and tender words,
Smoothing the path of bruised and stumbling feet."
—*British Weekly.*

As youth, you stand upon the threshold of an unexplored country. The road over which you are about to travel is not only intended for one-way traffic, but for you it is a strange highway.

When Joshua, the leader of Israel, was ready to lead his people across the Jordan River into the promised land of Canaan, he commanded them to follow

carefully the ark of God in order that they might not lose their way, giving as his reason for the command: "Ye have not passed this way heretofore."

The most of you are now entering that period in life which we speak of as later adolescence—the age of the new life. Sometimes I think it is rightfully called "The Land of Mystery," because so many of the experiences of youth are beyond human analysis. Fortunate indeed is that youth who travels the pleasant, but hazardous, path through early and later adolescence without stumbling.

On this journey of yours through life you will need advice and help. Friends are near who will gladly assist you—friends who themselves successfully have made this journey, and who know something of its pitfalls and dangers. Consult them freely and be not loath to take wholesome advice.

The next few years are of greater importance in the making of your life choices than you perhaps realize. Statistics show that the great majority of decisions for Christ and the church are made some time during the adolescent period, while, on the other hand, eighteen is now considered the age most prolific of criminals.

In the matter of speed you have no choice. You think you have, but you are mistaken. Four weeks to the month, twelve months to the year, a few years more, and youth is gone. Make the most of it. Time, the policeman, says, "Move on," and, however much we would like to idle along the way, we are compelled to keep moving. The only way to make this flight of time endurable is to make usefulness the prime characteristic of your days. Live for others as well as yourself.

Bethany College Sermons

"I have only just a minute—
Only sixty seconds in it—
Forced upon me, can't refuse it;
Didn't seek it, didn't choose it,
But it's up to me to use it;
I must suffer if I lose it;
Give account if I abuse it—
Just a tiny little minute,
But eternity is in it."

The opportunity to choose the road through youth and old age is a most valuable heritage which no one can take from you, and herein lies the danger of the fatal mistake; wherefore the reason for this particular message to you to-night, as you stand upon the threshold of this strange country, by you all unexplored. The doors of the high school are closing behind you; parents and teachers, the friends of your childhood years, tried and true, must say farewell, as they bid you godspeed upon your perilous journey through life. Thus far you have been led, sometimes unwillingly, but, as you now see, always wisely. But into this new region they who have been your leaders can not always accompany you. You stand at the parting of the ways. A confusing network of crossroads lies before you and the doors of opportunity open to you on every side. Into one of these you must enter—the others must be abandoned. The choice forces itself upon you. In vain you plead for time to be given to consider. Policeman Time is insistent with his demand to "move on." In the light of your past experience, and with the advice and counsel of friends, you must make your own life choices. From the confusing network before you, you must select one road, and, having reached your

One-way Streets

decision, you must walk therein through life, for "we shall not pass this way again." How vitally important, then, is the choice.

When we come to the parting of the ways, there are three important considerations which should enter into our choices: distance, condition and destiny.

The first of these we will dismiss with a word: Beware of the "short-cuts"! They are generally deceptive, and often bring disaster. There is no short-cut to learning, to wealth or to power. Stay in the improved road and avoid the mire.

The condition of the road is important, but not vital. The destiny is the all-important factor, and one who loses sight of this truth is blind. Of two ways leading to the same destination, choose the better; but beware lest, in your desire to travel the pleasant road, you lose your way. "Ye have not passed this way heretofore," and you are going the way whence you can not return. Be certain that you are on the right road.

Let us consider briefly five of the most important thoroughfares which open up before you to-night, and the condition and destiny of each.

The first of these I have chosen to call "Indolence Boulevard." This is the way of youthful fancy, leading through the garden of Eden, down the fascinating incline of Unrestraint, through the tunnel of Despair, and into the valley of Sin and Regrets. It is the way of least resistance, consequently it is a much-traveled way.

But some one says: "It looks all right to me, and when you follow the crowd you can't go wrong." Will you listen to the words of the wise man—the

sage of the Old Testament? "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes" (Prov. 12:15). You can't judge as to the destiny of a road by its looks, nor can you be certain of it by the *personnel* of those who travel it. Many derelicts go the way of "Indolence Boulevard" because it is the easiest way. Ask them to tell you where they are going, and they will answer: "Oh, no place in particular!" Ask them what they are doing, and they answer: "Not much of anything!"

Seamen tell us that the greatest peril of the ocean is what they call "derelicts," a name applied to abandoned vessels, tossed here and there by wind and waves—no life on board, no port in view. Likewise, on the sea of life, there is no greater danger to society than the derelict—the man or woman without ambition or thought of any goal. Don't be a derelict! A dead fish can float downstream, but it takes one with life to make the riddle. But you answer: "It *seems* to be all right." Please listen again to the sage of the Old Testament. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 14:12), and Jesus said: "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat." You can't always be safe in following the crowd. Be sure that the road upon which you travel leads to your goal.

Some years ago a traveling-man alighted from a trolley-car in Brownsville and inquired for the Wright-Metzlers store. On being informed that there was no such firm in Brownsville at that time he exclaimed: "Brownsville, did you say? Isn't this Connellsville?" When assured that it was not, he

began to curse and rave and to demean the West Pennsylvania Railroad Company, but all to no avail. The road had seemed to be all right. The divergence from the Connellsville route had been so gradual that it was unnoticed, but at the end of the line, when the conductor cried, "All out!" he found himself twelve miles farther from his goal than he had been one hour before. Young people, consult the guide-posts along the way to make sure of your destination. Avoid the "Indolence Boulevard"!

The second road to be considered we will call "The Golden Trail."

A number of years ago, when gold was discovered in California, hundreds of men left home and loved ones to seek their fortunes in the far West. The results are history. The road was not easy. Only a few became rich, and not all who found gold were happy, but they were all traveling "The Golden Trail."

Thus do we find it to-day in the experience of those who would travel this way. Some spend their lives in a vain search for wealth and die in poverty; some lose their health in the accumulation of a fortune, and would in return gladly give their fortune for the recovery of their lost health. The way of "The Golden Trail" is fascinating, but difficult and uncertain, and the treasure which is to be found at the end is largely a matter of chance.

Enter that road if you will; take your place alongside of the millions who are on the quest for material wealth, but do not make the mistake of confusing wealth with happiness. They are not identical, and seldom are to be found together. Neither should the

procuring of material wealth be the criterion by which you measure success. Upon this point men are often confused. Ask your neighbor what a certain man in your community is worth, and invariably he will respond by giving the amount of his worldly possessions. I know some millionaires who are not really worth thirty cents, and I am personally acquainted with some very poor people who are worth their weight in gold. You can't calculate a man's worth by his possessions.

The third highway which we shall note may be called "Potential Lane." It is the way by which we climb to a position of power. Some men are physical giants, but mentally and spiritually they are pigmies. Some strive for social leadership. They would rather lead in social circles than to be President of the United States. To be a member of the "Four Hundred" set has been the highest ambition of many a deluded soul. For this gaudy prize some would give their millions; some would sell their daughters; some would even sacrifice honor and virtue. Would you travel "Potential Lane"? Consider well the price you must pay and make certain that it is not costing you too dearly.

The fourth way which we will consider is "Intellectual Avenue." It is the road to learning. Scholarship lies at the end of this avenue, and is a prize which you may well covet. There is no royal road to learning. All who would attain to that high estate must be willing to pay the price in toil and sacrifice. It means a climb, but the reward is worth it.

Would you be an authority in music, art, science? Intellectual Avenue leads to these coveted goals. The

One-way Streets

road leads uphill; it is not always smooth or pleasant, but the goal is certain. Obstacles may hinder your progress; even friends may endeavor to discourage you, but if this is the way of your choice, go in to win.

"Somebody said that it couldn't be done;

But he with a chuckle replied

That maybe it couldn't, but he would be one

Who wouldn't say so till he'd tried.

"So he started right in with the trace of a grin on his face;

If he worried, he hid it,

And he started to sing as he tackled the thing

That couldn't be done,

And *he did it.*"

The fifth road, and the last which we shall consider to-night, I have named "The Ideal Highway." The prophet Isaiah speaks of this thoroughfare in chapter 35, verse 8: "A highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for the redeemed: the wayfaring men, yea fools, shall not err therein."

This road is frequently spoken of as the way of the fourfold life, or "The Jesus Way." Briefly, I desire to submit this way to you as the "Ideal Highway."

In Luke 2:52 we learn that "Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." Let us analyze this verse hastily in closing and see if we are able to unfold what its meaning is to us, and perhaps make an application to our own lives.

He advanced in wisdom. Man is endowed with an intellect, and any one who fails steadily to cultivate that endowment or gift refuses to accept a most

valuable heritage. Your education is not complete, even though you be the proud possessor of a high-school diploma. This certificate of graduation is not a magical key by means of which you may unlock the door to success. It is no more than a letter of introduction, which will admit you to some school of higher learning without question, where you may continue the quest for scholarship.

Jesus advanced in stature. A fertile brain in a healthy body is a prize to be coveted. In your quest for learning, do not sacrifice your health by inhaling the fumes from the midnight oil. (It is just possible that this advice is not needed.)

Jesus advanced in favor with God. A man who leaves God out of his life courts disaster. Man is by nature worshipful. No tribe or people has yet been found without the instinct for worship. The Indian worships the Great Spirit; the Chinaman worships his ancestors; and the egotistic, self-righteous sinner worships himself; but only "the fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (Ps. 53:1).

Jesus advanced also in favor with men. The "personal liberty" of which you hear selfish and ignorant men prate to-day is the liberty of a lone man upon a lone island. We live in a society of human beings, and an education which fails to help us adjust ourselves to such a community life has failed in its most important function.

A great educator defines education as "a preparation for complete living." If your parents and teachers have not been lax in their instructions, and if you have not failed in your grasp upon the instructions given, you are even now traveling the "Ideal

One-way Streets

Highway." The way of the fourfold life is not easy, but it is pleasant, and the goal to be attained is worth every effort for its attainment.

The "Ideal Highway" is the way of life. "Enter ye in by the narrow gate: . . . for narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it" (Matt. 7:13, 14).

The fourfold life is the full-rounded life. Every faculty is developed; every instinct for good is given its proper place, and the natural impulses are rightly correlated and adjusted. Thus we avoid the tragedy of a one-sided life, with one faculty overdeveloped, and the others suppressed. I recommend to you, young people, the "Ideal Highway."

CONCLUSION.

Charge to Class.

(Will the class please stand.)

Members of the class of 19—, you are to be congratulated upon your attainment. This Commencement season marks a milestone in your life to which in after years you will often turn in memory, either with pleasure or regret. May such discretion be used in the selection of your way, and such care employed in every step of your journey, that when you reach the "Sunset Trail"—one trail of which I did not speak, but which we shall all travel—there shall be no skeletons to cast weird shadows across your path.

If, as a result of this message, some one member of this class should be induced to select with greater care the road to be traveled, and thus be saved in

Bethany College Sermons

later life bitter tears of regret, I shall consider myself amply repaid, and shall indeed be most happy.

You occupy an enviable position, my friends, facing as you do the future, with all of its possibilities. Be true to the best that is within you. If you find it possible to continue your education, by all means do so.

In a certain compilation of the most prominent men and women in America, under the caption of "Who's Who," eight thousand names are given. Of this number 31 had practically no education; 808 had received an elementary education; 1,245 had graduated from high school, and 5,768 were college graduates.

About one per cent. of the population of the United States are college graduates, and from this one per cent. have come 69 per cent. of our statesmen, 75 per cent. of our Congressmen, all Cabinet members but two, and all the members of the Supreme Court.

The apostle Paul said upon one occasion: "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Old age looks back in memory to other days. Youth looks forward with hope, dreaming dreams and making those dreams come true.

You leave this room to-night facing the future. Decide upon your course in life and then determine to win.

We close with these lines from the pen of Joseph Clark:

One-way Streets

"O years, that hold within thy heart
Experience past, I do not turn to thee;
I rather fix my gaze on years to come—on things to be.
For, be they full or few, they give anew
A chance to better be—to better do.
Each day unfolds a stainless page
To score success, and wrest from failure
Some sweet sense of victory and might.
Thus may it be."

XI.

PROGRESS THROUGH THE GOSPEL

BY J. G. HURST.

"Be diligent in these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy progress may be manifest unto all."—1 Tim. 4: 15.

"Now I would have you know, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the progress of the gospel; so that my bonds became manifest in Christ throughout the whole prætorian guard, and to all the rest; and that most of the brethren in the Lord, being confident through my bonds, are more abundantly bold to speak the word of God without fear."—Phil. 1: 12-14.

IN the two passages here quoted, the beloved apostle Paul mentions two things in particular; first, the progress of the individual in godliness, and, second, the progress of the gospel itself. These passages from the pen of Paul should be of particular interest to us to-day. Especially should they interest those of us who live in the western part of the world, for progress is considered a truly western characteristic.

It is likely that every country has had some particular or peculiar point of emphasis—some slogan which has been more prominent in the thought of its people than others. This peculiar national emphasis has changed with different countries, and from time to time within the same country, but practically every nation of history has had its unique characteristic to which the thought of the people has been directed. Our own

beloved land has not been different from others in this, for we have stood for certain things and have given emphasis to various concepts at different stages of our national development. Religious freedom, political liberty and democracy all have claimed the eyes of an admiring public as leading national concepts, and are worthy of the deepest thought and merit further development in our national life. There is one concept, however, which at present stands out so prominently among others as to claim the attention of every thoughtful citizen. This is our peculiar American concept of progress. While many persons would not include it as one of the great ideals of our civilization, it seems to me, in our daily life and conduct, to stand out more prominently than any other. It is present in every group, is found in every classification of society, is prominent in our industrial order, and is a goal of almost every individual.

We all presume that we want progress. We pride ourselves in thinking that we are progressing, and take keen delight in ridicule of any person or institution which we feel is non-progressive. To many, however, the thought means merely that we are going somewhere—that we are not static.

Many who worship at the shrine of progress, who are the most earnest devotees of this peculiar concept, seem merely to think that progress means change, hence they are always ready to hear or do some new or strange thing. They are ready always to give themselves unstintedly to anything that seems to offer newness of thought or action, regardless of where they may be led or to what extremes their thinking may be directed. Newness in music, newness in art,

newness in invention, newness in thought, newness in modes of living—some think that all these make progress or that any one of them makes it.

Full well do I realize the futility of an attempt to change the customs of a people. And when a certain idea of progress has become so interwoven in the customs and ideals of a country as it has in our American life, it is well-nigh useless even to pause to ask the meaning of progress. Nor would I discount the value of progress in any civilization, for it is without doubt this very phase of life which has differentiated Occidental from Oriental civilization. We of the West, however, smugly assume that we are going somewhere, and that the mere going is of value in itself, little thinking of the destination.

It may be well for us, therefore, before deciding that we want progress, to ask what progress really means. To strive for a goal and attain our aim may bring very little satisfaction when the realization comes that that for which we have given so much in time and energy is not what we thought we were going to receive. If the question as to what progress really is, or what features compose progress, were to be submitted to different groups, it is likely there would be as many answers as groups.

To the industrialist, progress is more machinery, better machinery, better methods, larger production, reduced costs, ever-enlarging market area, limited competition. The thought might never enter as to whether the expansion of that particular industry would benefit humanity. It might be merely the realization of a slogan, "A cigaret in every mouth in China," and as long as China was able to pay and

Progress Through the Gospel

her citizens becoming more adept in the use of the cigaret, it would mean to the manufacturer splendid progress.

Others assume that science is the acme of progress, and that all our problems will be solved through its furtherance. Science has accomplished wonders in the uplift of humanity through the improvement of health by the prevention of disease, by means of better sanitation, enlarged knowledge of food combinations and values, medicine and surgery, control of contagion and the larger application of science to industry. Thus, beyond measure, it has proved a boon to the race, but a danger arises as to whether many are not considering science an end in itself rather than a means to an end.

Bertrand Russell, with keen insight, has pointed out some of the dangers in our scientific development. "Men sometimes speak," he says, "as though the progress of science must necessarily be a boon to mankind, but that, I fear, is one of the comfortable nineteenth-century delusions which our more disillusioned age must discard. Science enables the holders of power to realize their purposes more fully than they could otherwise do. If their purposes are good, this is a gain; if they are evil, it is a loss. In the present age it seems that the purposes of the holders of power are in the main evil, in the sense that they involve a diminution, in the world at large, of the things men are agreed in thinking good. Therefore, at present, science does harm by increasing the power of rulers. Science is no substitute for virtue; the heart is as necessary for a good life as the head. . . . By the 'heart' I mean, for the moment, the sum

total of kindly impulses. Where they exist science helps them to be effective; where they are absent, science only makes men more cleverly diabolic" (pp. 57-59, "Icarus," Bertrand Russell).

Scholars in the field of sociology have made several attempts to define progress, and generally have arrived at the conclusion that progress is a process whereby more of the good things of life are being distributed continually among an ever-increasing number of people. Without doubt this is a phase of progress, but it is progress only as long as there is continuity, for as in all of the former ideas there is progress only as long as the obtaining order is continuing. This, in reality, does not put us far in advance of the belief of the old Greek era which was that all things traveled in cycles, hence true progress was impossible, for, no matter how much was accomplished, all things would return to their original state, and even though the human race made great strides in achievement, the return was inevitable and their effort lost. They were at least right in one point of their argument, for without the element of eternal continuity there can be no true progress.

After all, what can be called progress that finally comes to naught? It matters not whether the ending be sudden or gradual. A man starting for a certain point would hardly be said to have made great progress, even though he traveled at sixty miles an hour, if before he reached his destination his machine were wrecked and his life lost. Neither would a college student have made great progress if, during a splendid college career, his health would break and his mind be lost. Nor would a man feel that he had accomplished

great gain in building a house in record time if the structure were immediately lost through fire. And what would it profit any country to make great strides in civilization and productiveness if all were to end in destruction?

These simple illustrations tend to indicate that accomplishment is of little worth without the element of continuity. In proving that anything is progressive, we must show that it will continue or its results be conserved, else we are in the predicament of the bricklayer who fell from a four-story building, but surprised friends by arising without their aid. Being asked if the fall hurt him badly, he replied that it did not; he was only hurt when he "stopped too quick." One might even be won by the mysterious winsomeness of the materialistic evolutionists' theory were it not for the culmination of the process.

In presenting the picture of such an end, Balfour has indeed given us a graphic description. "The energies of our system," he says, "will decay. The glory of the sun will be dimmed and the earth, tideless and inert, will no longer tolerate the race which has for a moment disturbed its solitude. Man will go down into the pit and all his thoughts will perish. The uneasy consciousness which in his obscure corner has for a brief space broken the contented silence of the universe, will be at rest. Matter will know itself no longer. 'Imperishable monuments' and 'immortal deeds' will be as if they had not been. Nor will anything that is better or worse for all that the labor, genius, devotion and suffering of man have striven through countless ages to effect." (P. 30, "The Foundations of Belief," Arthur James Balfour.)

Such a picture stifles hope and dwarfs ambition, for when one thinks of all precious thoughts, feelings and attitudes being forever lost, there remains little stimulus to attain. Thus, all mercy, justice, love and truth which has been dear to us is simply drawn out, a tiny thread of influence which soon becomes invisible and is lost forever. The best in life thus becomes only that which now is and soon will be no more.

However, there is a faith which bridges not only time, but eternity, and a progress which is not only for the here and now but which has every element of true advance, for it meets the needs of both the present and the future. Such progress is found in the godliness to which Paul has admonished Timothy to give diligence, for "godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come" (1 Tim. 4:8b). In such godliness Timothy was to make his "progress" "manifest unto all."

But what is this "godliness"? Of what does it consist? Paul answers when he says the sacred secret of godliness is:

"He who was manifested in the flesh,
Justified in the spirit,
Seen of angels,
Preached among the nations,
Believed on in the world,
Received up in glory." —1 Tim. 3:16.

And this godliness is the same as the gospel which Paul so clearly outlines in 1 Cor. 15:1-8: "Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, wherein

Progress Through the Gospel

also ye stand, by which also ye are saved. . . . For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures; and that he appeared to Cephas; then to the twelve; then he appeared to above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain until now, but some are fallen asleep; then he appeared to James; then to all the apostles; and last of all, as to the child untimely born, he appeared to me also."

Thus it is seen that the manifestation of Christ in the flesh, His witness, His death, His burial, His resurrection, His return to glory, together with the testimony of these tremendous facts and their being proclaimed throughout the world, constitute the gospel and the godliness in which Timothy was to show progress and for which Paul was willing to sacrifice his freedom and even his life, if through his sacrifice this gospel could only progress throughout the world.

And why the anxiety for the spread of the gospel? Simply that it is through the gospel, and through the gospel alone, that man knows Christ and God, and it is in obedience to the gospel that man enters into Christ and becomes a new and a progressive creature. "Wherefore, if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17). But how does the gospel bring the creature into Christ? The simple story of the life, the work, the death and the resurrection of Jesus is told in obedience to his command. This is the gospel story.

It inspires the individual, it produces faith, the "assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1), for the unseen becomes real and the hope of life with Christ and of eternal life through Christ becomes the possession of those who hear and obey the gospel. This is the "word of faith," which the apostle Paul says "we preach: because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:8-10). The individual who thus willingly confesses Jesus as Lord accepts with humility His leadership, believes in righteousness, turns away from sin and grieves that he has ever been given unto sin.

This is the "godly sorrow" which "worketh repentance unto salvation, a repentance which bringeth no regret" (2 Cor. 7:10). The individual believing with the heart unto righteousness, repenting because of godly sorrow, confessing with the mouth Jesus as risen Lord, is rapidly moving toward the new creature in Christ Jesus and finds the crowning step of the obedient way in Christian baptism through which act of obedience he comes fully into Christ, "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27).

This same baptism becomes a symbol of the death of the old and sinful man and the birth of the new. "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein? Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ

Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection; knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin; for he that hath died is justified from sin. But if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him; knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death no more hath dominion over him. For the death that he died, he died unto sin once: but the life that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 6:1-11).

In our baptism in water, a symbol of our burial in Christ's death, we not only receive remission of sins and put on Christ, but we are raised from the waters of baptism to reproduce in our new life those very characteristics which marked the risen life of our Lord. As Jesus ascended into the very presence of God, being at his right hand, so we in fellowship with Christ are challenged to live the risen life and to develop as new creatures in Christ Jesus the very qualities which Paul admonished Timothy as a servant of Christ to possess—a pure heart, a good conscience, faith unfeigned, diligence in service and willingness to teach. The new creature in Christ turns from "fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, division, parties, envyings, drunkenness, revellings and such like" (Gal. 5:19-21)

to "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control" (Gal. 5:22, 23).

What can possibly do more in this life for the progress of the individual and the betterment of mankind than the development of such virtues as those enumerated? With a society composed of people practicing such virtues and abstaining from the vices mentioned, the millennium would certainly be imminent. But such virtues can only be developed to their fullest in an atmosphere where Christ rules and where His friendship is fully felt. When He told His followers that He called them no longer servants, but friends, He laid the basis of that splendid fellowship in service which has done so much to produce the better elements of our existing social order. His love gives the Christian power to live the unselfish life of service in a world that lacks much of being ideal. Jesus' vision of a redeemed social order, developed through the personal righteousness of saved individuals, is one of the most comprehensive, most universal concepts of social progress ever conceived. Even if there were nothing but this earth life to be considered, there is no concept of progress that ever has been developed by man which has so completely revolutionized the social order.

But godliness is not only truly profitable for the life that now is, "but if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him; knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death no more hath dominion over him" (Rom. 6:8, 9), and to those who are found in Him "death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15:54b). Since death hath no dominion over Christ, He was able to say to His followers when He Himself was going to His death and

Progress Through the Gospel

to be separated from them: "Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:1-3). "He that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die" (John 11:25, 26).

These promises form the basis of true progress, the continuity of life eternally; with those splendid characteristics developed in Christ here and now and preserved forever, true progress becomes possible. Hence the gospel of Christ Jesus is profitable for the life that now is—yes, and also for the life that is to come. Living in Christ here and now is only basic for life everlasting in Him—life in which all worthwhile characteristics are preserved. Since "our Saviour Christ Jesus, . . . abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim. 1:10), it behooves us to give far greater consideration to the claims of the gospel, for when the plans and programs of men are forgotten the gospel will still be the basic factor in the progress of the human race.

It seems characteristic of every age to desire to develop plans of their own and to give to the world some new truth which the world has never considered, but such plans often die with the age that gave them birth. Our age is likely to prove no exception, and there is danger that we become so enthused with our various plans and give them so much publicity that the true gospel be obscured. Jesus said: "And I, if I be

lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself" (John 12:32), but when every group is lifting on high the banner of its individual party, sect, creed, plan, program or panacea for the ills of humanity, there is danger lest Christ be lost to the vision of the multitude in the midst of such debris. "We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us" (2 Cor. 5:20), and we must never forget or displace the authority of our King.

We need, in this as in every age, to exalt the Christ through His simple gospel until men everywhere know Him, trust Him, love Him, and surrender to Him in loving obedience. And to you, beloved, seeking progress in a progress-seeking age, comes the challenge to remember the Lord Jesus, for in Him you can manifest the most glorious progress possible to the human being; in Him your "progress may be manifest unto all," by the development of godliness in your individual life and by giving your influence to the progress of the gospel throughout the world. May we never make the mistake of overlooking the only progressive element in our quest for progress. May we never be guilty of substituting questionable methods which are called progressive, for the one genuinely progressive element of mankind, the gospel of Jesus Christ; and may we never so burden ourselves with those things which give promise for this life alone that we forget those elements which have promise of the life to come.

By lending our influence to the progress of the gospel throughout the world, we can accomplish the most possible in the life that now is, and in hope of

Progress Through the Gospel

the future be able to say with the apostle Peter: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Pet. 1:3, 4).

XII.

CRUCIFYING CHRIST AFRESH

BY W. H. MCKINNEY.

TEXT: "They crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh."
—Heb. 6: 6.

OUTLINE.

INTRODUCTION.

Religion's share in the crucifixion of Jesus.

I. BY A DISTORTED GOSPEL.

1. In its message.
2. In its truth about God.
3. In its attitude toward Jesus.

II. BY INSTITUTIONALIZED CHRISTIANITY.

1. Its overorganization and exalted position.
2. Its clergy.
3. Its divisions.

CONCLUSION.

Plea for humility and sacrifice on the part of the church.

WHO was to blame for the death of Jesus? Political authorities, represented by Roman soldiers, were responsible for nailing Him to the cross; but you will recall that it was religious leaders who whispered into the ears of the fickle-minded mob and suggested that Barabbas be released instead of the

Crucifying Christ Afresh

Son of God. It is obvious that religion had a share in the crucifixion of Christ nineteen hundred years ago.

In our generation, as in the centuries since His death, the Spirit of Jesus is seeking to express itself through His body, the church. It only takes a slight knowledge of conditions, as they are in the world, to convince one that the Spirit of Christ is being hindered in its task of making the kingdoms of this world the kingdoms of our God. Christian men and women may well pause and consider whether or not religion is sharing in a fresh crucifixion of Jesus.

It is a popular thing in many circles of society to criticize the church, and we are justified in opposing criticism which seeks only to destroy. However, criticism that is constructive, that seeks to build up, that purposes to mend the weak places, should be welcomed. Nineteen centuries have passed and still the task of winning the world for Christ is unfinished. We have made progress in establishing His kingdom; but we would hesitate to say that the world is ruled by the Spirit of Jesus. Even America seems to be "sailing under false colors" when she calls herself Christian. Our failures to make her Christian have not been because we have neglected to put forth energy. The amazing thing is that after so much effort and money have been spent we have not gained more ground. Possibly we have failed to understand the Christ and have been blindly misrepresenting Him. In view of our impotence, we, as members of the church, should be willing to consider with an open mind the accusation that the church has not always given to the world a right conception of the message of Jesus.

One can not read the Gospels and feel that Jesus intended His message to be other than a way of life in which "a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err." But when a man of the street turns to the church to-day to hear the gospel of the Galilean, there are so many voices crying so many different things that he is confused. Instead of a simple message, the gospel appears to be complicated. As he attempts to "tune in" it sounds like several jazz orchestras competing with one another, the competition being punctuated by static.

There is a difference between what preachers are saying about Jesus and what Jesus Himself said, and it is easy to understand why many get lost in the midst of so much confusion. With the church which claims to represent the Son of God speaking in so many different tongues, how can we expect the average man to view the gospel of Jesus as a simple message of "good news"? Too many versions of that gospel are circulating to-day, and, if Christ is to live in our generation, we must recover that which is vital in Christianity. Our religion has been made something intellectual rather than a simple way of life.

There is no real doubt about the manner of man that Jesus was. To be a Christian simply means to abide in Him; to be a follower of Him; to be a Christ-like person. But little by little the church has reduced His gospel from a great adventure in life to an agreement with certain intellectual and traditional statements of belief. Fundamentally, Christianity is a way of living in relation to God and in relation to our fellow-men. It is not a system of philosophy. It is not assenting to a creed. It is not primarily concerned

Crucifying Christ Afresh

with "belonging" to a church. It is a life lived in association with the life of Jesus Christ. Theology and local church membership may come after the Christian life is begun; but theology is only an attempted explanation of the experience, and church membership is an aid to help the man who is trying to be a follower of Jesus.

Your grandfather and my grandfather may have had different ways of explaining the experience of their Christian life. It is too bad that when our children become followers of Christ they must take up the church quarrels of their great-grandfathers. It seems as though the churches would have enough to do in fighting "the world, the flesh and the devil" without fighting one another.

A guide in Europe once said to a party of visitors: "This is the hall where the doctors of divinity disputed for four hundred years." "Indeed," replied the visitor, "and pray what have they settled?"

The daughter of a certain preacher, when asked by the caller if a doctor of divinity lived in this house, replied: "No; our divinity does not need to be doctored." Christianity has been so doctored that it is conceivable that Christ Himself would not be orthodox in many ecclesiastical gatherings of our day. If Jesus were to attend the great church conventions held in America each year, it is not likely that He would be sympathetic with the manner in which we consume our energy in debating secondary problems. After all is said and done, the majority of questions which are causing such heated discussions in religious circles to-day don't affect our way of living, whether we believe one way or the other. You and I will go on

Bethany College Sermons

living just the same, for instance, regardless of theological controversies over the story of Jonah and the whale. Happy are they who have the wisdom to see and act upon that which is vital in religion. Let us cease marking time and go forward in our task of preaching the gospel, bringing joy and peace to those who know and practice it.

At one time in my own life I thought that in order to be a good Christian it would be necessary to study all that everybody had thought and taught about Christ. I would have to know the teaching of Roman Catholicism, Christian Science, Spiritualism and all the hundred and fifty-seven varieties of Protestantism. Each one of these might have some truth which the others did not have, and I dared not miss any of it. But, thank God, I was stopped in my endless study of the many breeds of religious theory by a good old college professor. He showed me that all I needed to know to be a Christian was what Christ Himself taught, and all other teachings would take care of themselves in the light of His life and message.

Theology and intellectual disputing are interesting, but they will not save the world. What the world needs is a return to the religious experience of Paul and the early church, a revival of the religious experience of Jesus. A more challenging task than to restore the external organization of the early church is that of restoring the quality of life, which we find in the early disciples. They lived as they were taught by their Lord.

The outstanding revelation which Jesus made was concerning God. The most important subject He taught was not history nor science. He taught about

Crucifying Christ Afresh

God and how to live the abundant life. Through Jesus we learn that "God is a Spirit" like unto Jesus Himself. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Before Jesus' time men had only a partial knowledge of God. God has always been the same in His attitude toward mankind, but man's conceptions of God have changed. "No man hath seen God at any time; but the only begotten Son he hath declared him." Jesus revealed God as being present and personal in the life of His children and standing in the relationship of a Father to "all them that obey him."

"When ye pray, say, Our Father." Jesus spoke occasionally of God as "Judge" and "King," but these names were not prominent in His teaching. His usual way of thinking of God was as Father. It is a marvel that men often have fallen back to the less adequate conceptions of God, such as "King" or "Judge." With these inadequate conceptions they have tried to formulate theories of atonement to explain how God as a King or Judge could forgive us. Such theories have always been and must always be unsatisfactory. They will run all the way from extreme legalism to extreme mysticism. But when we put the conception of God as Father at the center of our thinking, we cease resorting to extremes and understand both God's justice and His love. The church can't give the world any higher conception of God than this: "What man is there of you, who, if his son shall ask him for a loaf, will give him a stone; or if he shall ask for a fish, will give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him."

Too often theology has fallen below the level of Christ's teaching about God and has pictured Him as a vindictive tyrant who hates His children instead of hating the wrong they do. In the days before the passing of the Volstead Act we heard often this statement, "We don't hate the saloon-keeper, but his business." Can't we credit God with having equally well-motivated discrimination? If "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life," may we not, without anxiety, leave to Him the matter of tempering His justice with love and mercy?

Jesus was divine—the "Son of God," but also Jesus was human—the "Son of man." The first thirty years of His life were spent in simple living, as a man, a citizen, a laborer and a "friend"—even of sinners. In His public ministry of three or four years the Gospels still picture Him as a man mingling with men in the ordinary relations of life, though permitting Himself to be known as the "Lamb of God" and announcing Himself as the "Light of the world." "He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin." He had to meet all the big problems of life, and by his suffering and temptation He is able to succor us. Let us gladly ascribe the highest of titles to Jesus. He is Lord, the Son of man, the Son of God. But let us not undervalue His humanity, His human sympathy. To do so is to rob Him of His chance to help us by His example in dealing with temptation and suffering. If we think of Him as using no power in His temptation which is not available to us, we are able to get a better basis for our

Crucifying Christ Afresh

confidence in His ability to help us and sympathize with us. When men so emphasize the deity of Christ as to isolate Him from the humanity He came to serve and to save, do they not "crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh"? In our efforts to remember the divinity of Jesus, let us not forget His humanity. The New Testament stresses both that He was the Son of man and the Son of God.

The cause of Christ, furthermore, is hindered by overorganization. Christianity has become too much institutionalized. In criticizing the church for having too much ecclesiastical machinery, I would not forget that we need organization. Jesus recognizes the plain necessity for organized effort. The Jewish church of His day was not so well advanced in learning as the church of our day, but it was the custom of Jesus to attend the synagogue on the Sabbath. He attended its festivals and took advantage of its opportunities for moral growth. The man who tries to fight sin in the world without the church is like a man trying to win a war single-handed without an army. We may ask, What is the church good for? The traditional answer is "to save souls." This is its primary function if we think of salvation in broader terms than just crossing a certain line in obedience to the command of the church and getting in reward a free ticket admitting us into heaven on the last great day. It is the function of the church to save from the wrong kind of living every soul it touches. Every life is an opportunity for such saving.

To put it in more positive terms, the church is here to show men how to come to Christ and how to abide in Christ. It exists to point out the way, the truth and

the life, and to help men to walk in the way, know the truth and live the life of Jesus. It is here to teach men to love God and to love their fellow-men. A Christian has a perpendicular obligation, which is to God, and a horizontal responsibility, which is to his neighbor. He must be both religious and ethical. The church is here to create and maintain the right kind of social and religious atmosphere or environment in which an individual may be free to grow Christlike. Our task is both individual and social. We are here to help build the kingdom of God. As we look at the church to-day we are constrained to think that in many respects it has forgotten its mission. In place of being a means to building the kingdom of God, it has become an end in itself. The church has exalted itself until more emphasis is given to its organization than to the quality of life it should live and promote. Churches often become so greatly interested in numbers—in adding new names to their rolls—that they fail in their main business of Christian living.

I am wondering if, when Jesus spoke of building His church, He thought or knew that there would develop a great hierarchy which would have many divisions in His name. Did He desire that His chief representatives should set the boundaries of His religion and put a fence of rules, regulations and traditions around God and lord it over their brother men? In the light of our understanding of the Spirit of Jesus, I wonder if He would be at home were He to walk into St. Peter's at Rome? Would He recognize all the cardinals, with their costly robes? Can it be that Christ ever dreamed that His church would develop into the forms in which we find Christendom now?

Crucifying Christ Afresh

The church in many places has so assumed a position of authority that it seems to say of itself: "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me." Missionaries are telling us that the same thing is happening in the East that is happening in our own land. People are losing interest in the church as an institution, but they have not lost interest in Christ.

I can think of no higher calling than that of being a minister. But we need to remind ourselves that the preacher is not the only one who ministers in Jesus' name. The tireless Christian doctor, skillful surgeon, patient teacher, the Christian leader in government or business; the man who gives honest toil with his hands as well as he who works with his brain; the mother who slaves and sacrifices for her children and the father who toils for his family; the boy and girl who are true because there are those who trust their faith in Christ—all these are ministers of His and do His pleasure. If this broad concept of ministering is the true one, how different from the Spirit of Jesus it appears when we see little preachers exalting their office above their ministry. Jesus never used fear or dogmatic authority to get men to become His followers.

He refused to practice magic to win the people. Would He approve of the magic so often attached to the observance of what are called "sacraments" to-day? After all, in what sense is a "clergyman" different, that his blessing should be considered greater than that of a godly mother? What authority has he the right to claim except the goodness of his own character? A note that is sadly lacking in many churches to-day is the note of authority—the authority of Him who said "all

authority hath been given unto me"—go, preach the gospel. We need to feel that we are all successors of the apostles. The reason we have failed to hear this note of certainty has not been because some have failed to emphasize the importance of their office. It has been because men have lost their sense of contact with God which Jesus had. If men and women in our churches learn to live the spiritual life in relation to God and their fellow-men which Jesus lived, the church will speak with a voice that comes from God through Christ and in no uncertain tones.

In view of Jesus' prayer that His followers might be one, what would He think of the divided condition of His church to-day? Each sect is shouting its own little battle-cry and forgetting that he who would exalt himself must first be humbled. It is to our shame as followers of Christ that, instead of being united in our battle against sin, we are a jostling crowd split because of ecclesiastical ambitions and selfish motives. Thousands of towns and cities are wastefully over-"churched." It is not uncommon to find a town of eight hundred or a thousand people giving, with a great deal of difficulty, meager support to a half-dozen churches. Five or six "shamelessly underpaid ministers are in the community, and five or six rather expensive and often unsightly church buildings are scattered about. Each one is used but a few hours each week." Is it any wonder that the church is weak? "In unity there is strength." "A house divided against itself cannot stand."

We need the church; but we do not need the divisions that exist contrary to the prayer of our Lord. Is not this divisive spirit putting to death the Christ

Crucifying Christ Afresh

and thus crucifying Him afresh? The church's need in the midst of her sin of division is humility and a renewed passion for sacrificial service. It is quite clear that Jesus looked upon Himself as a servant rather than a master. His position was not one of pride, and He did not claim the governing power of a Roman emperor. Sectarianism, whether it be Catholic or Protestant, would be condemned by Him. We can't think of Him as approving the selfish denominational spirit that creeps into the very best of churches, even though the church shout from the housetop that it has no creed but Christ. We can't think of Jesus as seeking the highest place at a banquet, or entering into competition for the most applause or the greatest earthly position of prestige and power. The only competition He urged was that of service. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

We must judge an institution by the same laws we use in judging an individual. If it is wrong for one man to steal, it is wrong for an organization of men to steal. If it is wrong for an individual to exalt himself, it is wrong for an institution to exalt itself. Christianity is the very same thing for the group that it is for the individual. Surely Jesus does not expect His church to be less in love, humility and sacrifice than He expects the individual follower to be.

It is time that each of the divisions of Christendom should cease living for itself. Instead of crucifying the Christ afresh by its divisive message and its overemphasis upon its own organizational excellence, it should determine to know nothing "save Jesus Christ and him crucified." In losing its life for the sake of Jesus Christ, His church will find it.

XIII.

JESUS' WAY WITH SINNERS

(EXPOSITORY SERMON.)

BY MAURICE FOGLE.

"And he must needs pass through Samaria. So he cometh to a city of Samaria, called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph: and Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. For his disciples were gone away into the city to buy food. The Samaritan woman therefore saith unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, who am a Samaritan woman? (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his sons, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life. The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come all the way hither to draw. Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said unto him, I have no husband. Jesus saith unto her, Thou saidst well, I have no husband: for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy

Jesus' Way with Sinners

husband: this hast thou said truly. The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father. Ye worship that which ye know not: we worship that which we know; for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth. The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh (he that is called Christ): when he is come, he will declare unto us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he."—John 4: 4-26.

"And from that city many of the Samaritans believed on him because of the word of the woman, who testified, He told me all things that ever I did. So when the Samaritans came unto him, they besought him to abide with them: and he abode there two days. And many more believed because of his word; and they said to the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy speaking: for we have heard for ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world."—John 4: 39-42.

IF we talk about religion, it usually is on Sunday, and at church. But Jesus did not confine His conversation about God or great spiritual truths to the synagogue, or to the sabbath day. He used mealtimes and social visits; He met people at work or at leisure; He talked with them in the fields or by the wayside. We can learn a profitable lesson from His custom of taking advantage of every-day opportunities to do good.

When we talk about religion, it usually is to the already religious. We preach respectability to the respectable, Christianity to Christians, and goodness to the good. Jesus, however, was different. He urged the faithless to have faith, and the unrighteous to become righteous.

On His way to Galilee, His home country, the Master passed through Samaria. Having approached the town of Sychar, and being somewhat weary, He sat down to rest on the curb of Jacob's well. While He was there a woman of Samaria came to get water.

I. *This woman is representative of all sinners.* Most of us are by no means so far gone morally and spiritually as was this woman, but an assessment of ourselves will show a strong similarity between her life and ours.

Her life reminds us that sin destroys the finer traits of personality. If we say that Jesus knew the extent of her sin because of His divine intuition, we are dodging the issue. Misconduct makes its marks on the countenance; it coarsens the speech and it cheapens the general appearance of man or woman. A woman sins at the expense of her loveliness, modesty, gentleness and sweetness—indeed, at the expense of all the characteristics which make for womanliness. The price man pays for evil conduct or impure thought is quite as great: chivalry, nobility and loyalty are no longer forces in his life. His very integrity is shattered and all the traits which make for manliness disappear. The keen observer detects this folly no less certainly than did Jesus detect that of the sinful woman at Jacob's well.

We also see that sin deadens us to life's rich symbolism. Jesus found His method of approach to this woman's heart by means of the drink of water for which He had asked: "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." The woman saith unto him, "Sir,

Jesus' Way with Sinners

thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: whence then hast thou that living water?"

In our most immediate surroundings there is often—nearly always—that which will teach us spiritual truth, if we but look for it. In the life of this woman water-carrier the finer sensibilities were crushed. "Living water" meant nothing to her. She had fallen into a hopeless, disheveled way of living. Her expectations were limited by earthly conditions. Her affections were worn out. Her character was gone. Listlessly, day by day, she went about her task. It was a long walk to the well; there were frequent quarrels over one's turn while there; there was the strain of lifting the bucket from the deep pool and the climb with the heavy jar on the head—all a constant weariness. But the Samaritan woman had become hardened into her way of living. Her environment had for her no inspiration.

There are many who are like that to-day. For them life means nothing more than routine. Spiritually, they see nothing. They will drink from a cool spring out on a hillside with gratitude, but if they are told of a "living water" which satisfies the thirst of the soul, they can not understand the term. There are those who never seem to realize that daily bread is not enough, and that in it there is a symbol of that "bread of life" which will appease the deeper hunger. Still others may be told about the sunshine which lights the earth, and their faces will glow with appreciation; but of the sunshine which radiates from the Sun of righteousness they are not aware. Or if they are taken to a beautiful garden where flowers are in full bloom, they will delight in the colors and the perfumes; but they

never seem to know that they must have "roses in their hearts."

Everywhere about us is that which teaches of God and His greatness. We see Him in the sun and the stars and the ocean. But when sin has deadened the sensibilities, we see simply gloom and monotony, or glitter and sham, in all our surroundings.

It furthermore may be seen from the Samaritan woman's talk with Jesus that sin leads to quibbling about religion. When the woman said, "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come all the way hither to draw," Jesus commanded her to call her husband. Her situation was difficult; and more so when Jesus told her of her mode of life at that time.

Apparently embarrassed, she shifted the subject. How strange, but nevertheless true, that if a sinner is shown his evil habits he straightway wants to argue about some phase of religion! Moreover, he usually starts out on the same tack as did the woman of Samaria. He wants to argue from the viewpoint of his father's or his mother's or his grandparents' religion. "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain." It is a lamentable fact, but too true, that a great many of our young men and young women go on in life with a sentimental feeling of respect for the religion of mother or dad, but with an attitude as far as they are concerned, "We are beyond that sort of thing."

The woman of Samaria lacked a vital religious experience of her own. She had a few scattered fragments of religion which had been handed down to her. How much she is like us to-day! Jesus' purpose with us, as with this woman, is to awaken us to our own

Jesus' Way with Sinners

immediate and desperate need. We have a few scraps of religion, too. She represents us. Shall we not, as Jesus bids us do, change these fragments for a more complete and a more vital religious faith?

II. Now that we have seen that we are like the woman at the well, we must observe how Jesus dealt with her.

He began by treating her courteously. Here at this well, set in beautiful scenery, Jesus talked to this poor, bedraggled soul as if she were a queen. That is the noble way. We are inclined to speak condescendingly to those who have lived evil lives. Jesus did not talk down; He lifted this woman up by His very conversation.

If He had abruptly accused the Samaritan woman of sin, He might have provoked denial and have caused her to depart in anger. He was too gentle, too thoughtful, too tactful, to act in that manner. He led her on to self-accusation.

Jesus is considerate with us. He puts a high value on the human soul. He expects much from sinners—even from great sinners. There is no reason in any one's past for despair. If you have been a great offender, you can yet forsake your evil ways and attain noble heights. The power of Christianity lies in its ability to make an outcast one of the best citizens of the kingdom.

It also may be noticed that Jesus' words penetrate to the very heart of the sinner. "Thou hast had five husbands." Jesus had a prophet's insight into character. He had to lay bare the secrets of the heart. The skillful surgeon may "cut deep" to remove the bad flesh before the normal tissue can develop. The

past follies of this woman's life were exposed. A consciousness of guilt was awakened, and there was hope because she realized what her life really was. Such is true of all who are in sin. When they are made aware of their own wickedness, they will grope for the Light which will heal their hearts and illumine their paths.

You may not have to be spoken to as severely as was this Samaritan woman. Perhaps the mere acquaintance with Jesus will cause you to say, "Forgive me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man." But you may, like this woman, be so accustomed to sin and evil-doing that the rebuke will need to be more stern. However that may be, the important thing is this: Jesus leads us to convict ourselves. He arouses our consciousness of guilt, and then He teaches us the way of salvation.

We must further observe that Jesus, in His conversation with the water-carrier, gave her a higher view of God. The woman at the well brought up a long-argued dispute. "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain, and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." What trivial, quibbling statement concerning a sacred matter!

How many people live limited lives because of an inadequate conception of God! Perhaps this woman expected that the new prophet, being a Jew, would ask her to go to Jerusalem to worship. Then it was that Jesus made one of His great pronouncements—one that swept away the bigotry of centuries. "Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father."

In other words, He is not the God of Samaria nor of Jerusalem; not the God of Gerizim nor of Moriah. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth." The Samaritan woman was brought face to face with a new idea in religion. Communion with God is to be a spiritual communion. The Father is not restricted by race, location nor time. He is the God of all the nations. People are no longer to take an animal into the temple for sacrifice; they are to give themselves to God. The placing of candles above altars to show that light is coming into the world is insufficient; each individual is to shine as a light lighted by Christ. The swinging of censers to symbolize the sweet-smelling prayers of saints is no longer necessary; God wants the humble and sincere prayers of consecrated hearts. This is spiritual worship of the Father who is Himself a Spirit. Worship is to be in truth. No longer are people to bow blindly and ignorantly. With this new conception of God, men and women are able to worship with a new sincerity. The Samaritan woman's argument was answered. She was given a higher appreciation of God.

Then, too, Jesus revealed Himself as the Saviour. "The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh (he that is called Christ): when he is come, he will declare unto us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he."

The Master had given her a personal God; now He was giving her a personal Saviour. A few men and women have been led to find God in the great out-of-doors; some have found Him in the quiet, but mighty, voice of conscience speaking from within; some have

found Him from reading books of wisdom and philosophy; but the great heart of the world knows no mighty faith until it accepts the Christ of Galilee.

Before the mystery of Him we all stand amazed. To Professor Dodd, the prominent British scholar, a group of us put the question: "How do you explain Jesus?"

His reply came quickly, and to this effect: "Nearly all men—philosophers, theologians, scientists, psychologists and dreamers—have talked about that problem. No solution is adequate. You and I will go on and the question will continue to be discussed. Jesus was the Son of man and the Son of God, unique and supreme in the history of the world. What more need be said?"

Notice the response of the woman. The hour had been a tumultuous one in her life. It was an occasion of reawakened aspirations and retouched ideals. "So the woman left her water-pot and went away into the city, and saith to the people, Come, see a man who told me all things that ever I did: can this be the Christ?" How quickly she sped to tell others of Jesus! Would that we were as concerned to carry the good news to those we call neighbor and friend!

Notice the reaction of the Samaritans. Eagerly they made Jesus their guest. He abode in their city two days. After that brief sojourn they came to the woman with a message which Jesus would have been delighted to hear, and which the whole world must come to say:

"Now we believe, not because of thy speaking: for we have heard for ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world."

Jesus' Way with Sinners

That is the truth that Jesus would have every one come to know: the religion of personal experience with a living Saviour. Ours can not be a second-hand faith if it be victorious. We need Jesus to come into our lives and to teach us the way to God.

III. In conclusion let me remind you that the well of Samaria has become a permanent and ever-recurring experience in the history of Christianity. Beside it, sinner and Saviour are united. You will need to visit there and to listen to the Master. Perhaps the finer traits of your personality have been somewhat destroyed; perhaps you are dead to the rich symbolism of your surroundings; and perhaps you, too, are a mere quibbler about religion. This day may be as revolutionary in your life as was the one by the well for the woman water-carrier. Let Jesus speak. He will treat you considerately; He will lay bare your heart only to heal it; He will give you a higher conception of the Father, and He will become your own personal Saviour. Do you not hear Him when He says:

“Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life”?

XIV.

CHRISTIANITY THE BEST WAY

BY CLIFFORD BUCY.

"Enter ye in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby. For narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it."—Matt. 7: 13, 14.

ORIGINALLY, Christianity was a way of life; it was following Christ. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4). So unique in character was His teaching, His life and the life to which He called His disciples, that after His resurrection, when men began to accept Him as Saviour and Lord, the new movement was designated as the "Way." It presented a new method of living. It involved faith in Christ, submission to Christ, sharing the life of Christ and walking in the way which He taught and exemplified. It is all so simple that a child can understand it, and yet it involves all that is vital and fundamental in Christianity.

According to the statement of our text, which is a fragment of the great Sermon on the Mount, the Master points out the fact that there are two ways man may travel in this life. There is *the way that leadeth unto life*, and *the broad way that leadeth to destruction*.

Christianity the Best Way

"Which way? Choose now—

You have come to the parting of the ways.

One path leads up to heights sublime;

Downward the other slopes, where abide

The refuse and the wrecks of time.

Choose, then, nor falter at the start;

Oh! choose the nobler path and part."

I. THE TWO WAYS OF LIFE CONTRASTED.

First, let us consider the dimensions of the two ways. One is described as having a "narrow gate" and a "straitened way." The other has a "wide gate" and a "broad way."

1. A "straitened way" means progress—not because of easy going, but because of strength developed in overcoming difficulties. Jesus pictured the Christian race of life over a hard course because progress is desired. They meet with resistance, but still "press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," and finally arrive.

Those on the upward journey are seeking a prize which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give. He has gone on ahead and has beckoned the world to "Come, follow me!" The travelers begin this progressive journey as "newborn babes" who "desire the sincere milk of the word." They grow stronger each step of the way by overcoming. Many toddle and fall a few times as "babes," but they get up and try again. After awhile they are strong enough to partake of the "sound doctrine" which carries them rapidly on. They grow unto salvation. Development is necessary in the Christian race of life, and toil is necessary to development. When they come to the end of the "long,

long trail" they will not be judged by what they once were, but by their growth toward what they ought to be.

The narrowness of the way is as broad as Jesus Christ, which is not very narrow, as the world will testify. No man has fathomed the length, height, breadth and depth of His love. He said: "I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and go out, and shall find pasture" (John 10:9).

2. The words "wide gate" and "broad way," used by Jesus in describing the dimensions of the other way open for man to travel, were not meant to convey the idea of freedom so much as "doing as you please." It does not convey the idea of getting anywhere, or of accomplishment. It indicates sluggishness, rather than pressing on to a goal. Very little is accomplished unless a goal is constantly in view. Emerson rightly said, "Hitch your wagon to a star." Those on the broad way of life are so holden by its expanse and breadth that they fail to strive for the mastery that results from right action.

Second, the leaders of the two ways are Jesus Christ, "the Captain of the Lord's host," and Satan, "the deceiver of the whole world."

1. Jesus, the Captain of the Christian followers, has traveled every step of the way. He said, "I am the way" (John 14:6). "He goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice" (John 10:4).

In Europe and the Orient they have the proper conception of shepherding. The shepherds go ahead of the flocks, and the sheep love them so much that

they will follow wherever they lead. A Swiss shepherd was watching his flocks in the Alps Mountains during a hot summer season. He noticed that the pasture was growing shorter and shorter each day. He said: "I must find new pasture for my sheep or they will all famish here." Daily he would go high into the mountain regions in search for new pasture, keeping watch over his sheep from a distance. One day he found a valley filled with green grass and fountains of trickling water. He said, "I must get my sheep up here some way." Without hesitation he hurried down the mountainside and came into the midst of the flock. He called all the sheep to him, and then started up the mountainside, calling for them to follow.

They followed on and on up the steep ascent farther than they ever had climbed before. Finally they huddled together because of fear, and would not travel farther through love of their shepherd. So he decided to drive them up when they declined to follow. He stood behind them and lashed them with his tongue and his shepherd's crook. They falteringly and hesitatingly climbed up a distance farther, but not far enough. He said: "This will I do. I shall pick up one of the lambs of the flock and hold it to my breast and entice the mother sheep to follow her own as an incentive to the flock." This he did. And when he finally came to the valley of green grass and trickling water, he placed the lamb down in the foliage and the mother sheep was there to claim her own. Looking back a short distance, he saw the rest of the flock.

God is using just such a plan with us. He is "not willing that any should perish." He desires to bring us into His "green pastures." "Jehovah is my shep-

herd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside still waters. He restoreth my soul: he guideth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me" (Ps. 23:1-4).

Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, has gone ahead. He says, "Come, follow me." Through love we follow Him along the great Christian race of life. "We join the procession," says Talmage, "with our smaller crosses and our lighter burdens, and Christ looks back and He sees some are halting because they can not endure the shame or bear the burden, and, with a voice that has in it majesty and omnipotence, He cries until all the earth trembles: "Whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple." It is thus that the straitened or difficult way is mastered, and in mastering it we grow.

2. Satan, the ruler of the "darkness of this world," and "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience," is the leader along the broad way of life. His leadership is not motivated by love. He leads his followers by means of his devices, schemes, wiles, strategies, arts and plans. Beware "lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices" (2 Cor. 2:11).

Those who follow Satan are going ahead on the road to destruction in the face of this warning! "Be sober, be watchful: your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5:8). He has his followers already hypnotized and under the spell of his wily ways.

Christianity the Best Way

One summer several friends motored with us into Canada. We camped on the shores of the beautiful Gull Lakes near Minden, Ont., for several days of fishing. One day we decided to troll one of the largest lakes for trout. We had about three hundred feet of copper wire on our troll reel, with a shining spinner attached and well leaded. When we came to the proper place we began to unwind the wire into the beautiful lake waters, while the guide rowed ahead with all his strength. It was not long until we had 250 feet of the line out. Suddenly a heavy jerk told us that we had either struck a log or that a game trout had struck the shining spinner. We tugged at the line and found that it was not fastened to a log. Slowly we reeled in until only fifty feet of line was out. Then we could see the game fish splash the surface waters behind. We were ordered to give the fish plenty of line, which we did. The guide said: "We will have to tire that big fellow out." It was not long until he was lying on his side from fatigue. We pulled him near the canoe, and when he saw the occupants he made a terrific splash and dash, and pulled the line after him for several yards. (As much as to say, you will not capture me!) Again we gave him all the line he wanted and all the time he wanted. Finally he was so worn out that he was easily captured and lifted into the canoe.

This is the very plan that shrewdly is being used by Satan, whom many are following down the broad way to destruction. He desires to get you into his very clutches. You do not have to travel this way. We are warned in our text: "Enter ye in by the narrow gate."

Third, the companionships of the two ways of life will now be brought under observation.

1. Hundreds of years before it was opened up, Isaiah the prophet explained the Christian highway of life in detail. In Isa. 35:8-10, he says: "And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for the redeemed. . . . No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast go up thereon; they shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of Jehovah shall return and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads."

This prophetic description clearly indicates who are to be found on the Christian way of life. "It shall be for the redeemed." "The redeemed shall walk there." Upon it "the ransomed of Jehovah shall return unto Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads." "The unclean shall not pass over it." Those that have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb are to be found there. Christ "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." What a blessed fellowship on the highway of holiness!

2. Since there are but two ways to travel through this life, and since we are either on one or the other of these ways, it is not difficult to deduce the companionships of the journey. What is characteristic of the companionship of one course will not be characteristic of the other.

Inasmuch as the "unclean" do not pass over the Christian way of life, we naturally shall look for them

on the broad way. Using the same deductions, we naturally shall expect to find "lions" there, as well as "ravenous beasts." Yes, "the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" as leader of his following host. This characteristic is generally found in the worldly walk of life. The ideals of helpfulness, love, sacrifice and nobility are wanting in the world. Selfishness, greed, materialism and good times are the marks of all life on this low plane.

Fourth, the destinations of the two ways will make an interesting comparison.

1. Jesus said: "Enter in by the narrow gate: . . . for narrow is the gate and straitened the way that leadeth unto life." This refers to eternal life, the life that Jesus came to give to the world, of which He said: "I am come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." This earthly life does not suffice. Following Christ, we pass through this life, through death, through the grave, through the resurrection, into that abundant life of eternity.

Jesus also said, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." This reveals another interesting aspect of the destination of the journey. We shall be ushered into the very presence of the Father.

Paul said: "I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." The Christian race of life finally brings the faithful into favor with God and into a "well done" that will spell "eternity."

2. "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction." All men, those who have traveled the "narrow" as well as the "broad" way, will be brought before the great judgment-seat on the

last day, and will be judged according to the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or bad. To the unfaithful the Judge shall say: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41).

The fourfold comparison of the two possible ways of life clearly shows that the way of following Jesus Christ is the best way. Its arrangement makes for progress; its Leader is tried and true; its companionship is Christian, and its destination leads into the very presence of God.

In following the broad way, the very breadth of the way kills progress; the leader is constantly seeking to devour; the companionship often is unclean and sometimes ravenous, and the destination is eternal punishment.

Heed the warning of Jesus: "Enter ye in by the narrow gate."

II. HOW TO FIND AND FOLLOW THE RIGHT.

The New Testament clearly tells us that

First, since Christ is the "way," they are following that way who put on Christ. "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." They are worthy of being on this great way of life. How does the individual put on Christ?

1. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." For this to happen on the part of any individual, he must *hear* of Christ, of His beautiful life, of His sacrificial death, of His triumphant resurrection, of His present Lordship as He sits to-

Christianity the Best Way

day, living, ruling, interceding for us, at the right hand of the Father on high.

2. Having heard, the individual must then *believe* in Christ. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." God made "no difference between the Jew and the Greek," "purifying their hearts by faith."

3. After a change of heart, brought about through faith in Christ, the individual turns from the evil ways of the world to Christ and His ideals. This turning is called repentance. This word is made up of two Latin parts: *re*, which means "back," and *pendo*, which means "to turn." Those who repent turn back to Christ, and turn their backs upon the things of the world. Peter on the day of Pentecost, A. D. 30, said: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins." This is a very necessary and critical step in the process of putting on Christ and planting your feet on the way of life.

4. Confessing faith in Christ is the fourth step in putting on Christ. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10:9). "Every one therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 10:32, 33).

5. Baptism is the final act that changes the state of the individual. Before this act of obedience the individual is in the state of sin. Now, having obeyed,

"as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ," and walk in the way of everlasting life.

→ *Second, by fulfilling the New Testament plan of salvation, we apply the blood of Christ to our sinful souls and are cleansed from all unrighteousness.* We are worthy to walk with Christ. And now that we have placed our feet on the solid bedrock of this great highway of life, even Christ, the Rock of Ages, the next issue before us is:

III. HOW TO STAY ON THE BEST WAY.

It is of no avail to put your hands to the plow and then to turn back. The Christian is specifically enjoined that "he that endureth to the end the same shall be saved." The early Christians "continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers."

1. *Bible reading* gives stability to the Christian life. The Bible is the "blue book" pointing the way for the Christian. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and light unto my path." "Study to show thyself approved unto God." It enables you to keep in the footsteps of Jesus, who has gone on ahead.

2. *Prayer lightens* the heart of the weary traveler. Pause by the roadside at regular intervals and complete the conversation with the great Guide on the journey. He talks to you through the Word. Talk to Him in prayer, thus completing the conversation.

"Oh, how praying rests the weary!
Prayer will change the night to day;
So, when life seems dark and dreary,
Don't forget to pray."

Christianity the Best Way

3. *The Lord's Supper*, or communion service, is the great sustaining ordinance of Christ, our Leader. It is kept in the church for His followers that they may remember His sacrificial death until He comes again. "Upon the first day of the week," we are told, "the apostles came together to break bread," setting the example of frequency for us. Forsake not "the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. 10:25). The communion service hour is the time for real worship and reconsecration.

4. *Service* is the keynote to stability. It breaks the possible monotony of the Christian journey. Following Christ naturally calls for service, for His example was one of service. Find work to do on the highway of life, and do it. The motto hanging in the front of Bethany College Chapel Hall for years was: "Find your place in God's program and fill it."

"There's a place—oh, may I find it—
Where my mission I can fill;
Be it humble or exalted,
May I hold it with a will;
Help me serve my generation
With a heart of love and grace.
Help me, Lord, from this time onward,
Find and occupy my place."

God and Satan both have ways for you to travel during this life. Satan's way is broad and leads to destruction. God's way is Christ's way that leads unto life. The question as to where you will spend eternity may depend upon the choice you make now. Which way will you choose?

XV.

VICTORY THROUGH DEFEAT

BY DWIGHT E. STEVENSON.

TEXT.—“For whosoever would save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it.”—Matt. 16: 25.

IN this statement which Christ made to His disciples, there is a paradox. It seems contradictory to say that whosoever tries to save his life shall lose it, but that whosoever shall lose his life for Christ's sake shall find it. Yet, life has given us many examples in which the paradox holds the rarest truth. Socrates ended his life under condemnation, being forced to drink the cup of hemlock, but he has lived on through the ages, a colossal figure beloved and honored by all the world. Crassus, a member of the first Roman Triumvirate, was one of the wealthiest citizens of the empire; yet that wealth which clothed him in regal splendor availed him nothing on the field of battle in Parthia, where Surena, the Parthian general, put him to death by pouring molten gold down his throat. History is filled with the truth of the paradox, but nowhere is that truth more permanent than in the statement of Jesus: “For whosoever would save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it.”

One of the most difficult principles of Christianity, for the eye of faith to see, is that the surest victory

Victory Through Defeat

must come through defeat. If any man would become master of all, let him become servant of all. Let him follow the example of Christ, who emptied Himself of His glory.

I. *In studying the life of the Master we find that He was victor through defeat.* The Jewish nation was looking for a Messiah. They expected a prince who would sit upon a throne in royal array, who would exert his power and bring all the world under subjection to the Jewish nation. He would be surrounded with all the majesty of state and attended with pomp and splendor. His glory would be the glory that comes from the clash of victorious battle and the acclaim of vindicated people.

Alas! what a contrast was the real Messiah to the picture in the Jewish mind! He was born in a lowly manger, in the company of beasts of burden. Shepherds, and not the envoys of empires, paid tribute to the new-born King. He was hunted in His infant days until His parents were forced to flee to Egypt to protect His life. He was not reared in the court of a king, but dwelt in a carpenter's home and shared in its labor. His education was that which fell to the lot of every Jewish boy—the training of the synagogue school. It was not His privilege to attend the school of the rabbis. So unusual was this state among leaders of the day that men marveled and said: "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" When He entered His ministry He went humbly on foot about His native land. He Himself said: "Foxes have holes and the birds of the heaven have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Who knows how many nights He spent on the Mount of

Olives with the canopy of heaven as His only roof? His helpers were not of the learned, but they were lowly men—fishermen, a despised publican, illiterate men taken from the common lot. Jesus Christ would hardly be termed a success, much less a victor, in the parlance of to-day.

The cross stands for all ages a sign of Jesus' failure. As He was captured by the mob and taken to Jerusalem, His disciples deserted Him. "Peter followed afar off." Judas was a traitor. John was the only one of all His disciples at the foot of the cross. The others had deserted Him. He had failed to gain the loyalty or understanding of those who were most intimately associated with Him. The cross is a sign of failure! It was a sign that His followers were few and His kingdom small. How many followers do you suppose He had then? Paul speaks of "five hundred brethren." Five or six hundred, or a thousand at the most! Not a large kingdom! According to men, God failed there on the cross! It is the world's brand of contempt—it stamps Jesus as the greatest failure of all ages.

And yet—that hour of darkness becomes a gleam of light shining 'round the world. It is as a tiny spark of light ever increasing in brilliancy until it sends forth a great, shining ray, lighting the whole world. The Jesus that died on the tree was victor in that hour, not they who hanged Him there! Jesus Christ is the incarnation of the truth which His own lips uttered.

He knew what true victory was. He gave Himself, "who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being

Victory Through Defeat

made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross. Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

II. *Let us now turn to the church. As we review her history we find that she, too, has been victor only as she has given her life or has been defeated.* Christianity went into the Roman Empire an illicit religion. During the first three centuries the Christians were commanded, as were all subjects of Rome, to worship the emperor. This they would not do, since Christ was to them the only Lord and King. Their refusal brought persecution upon the church. Every means of torture was employed to persuade the Christians to forsake their "silly superstition." Tacitus tells us that Nero burned ten thousand Christians at the stake in his gardens one night to illuminate his nocturnal festival. They were crucified, burned, exposed to the mercies of wild beasts, exhibited for the amusement of crowds, roasted in iron chairs, covered with boiling pitch, and subjected to the cruelest devices of the Roman army. There is a tradition that Peter was crucified head downward, and another tradition that John was boiled in oil. During the first three centuries Christians were put to death by the thousands.

In the midst of that persecution, when all seemed defeat and despair, they went to their doom with shouts of victory and died with radiant smiles upon

their faces. Ignatius, who was put to death in Rome about 120 A. D., said just before his torture: "Come, fire and cross and grapplings with wild beasts, cuttings and manglings, wrenching of bones, breaking of limbs, crushing of my whole body; come, cruel tortures of the devil, to assail me; only be it mine to attain Christ." Cyprian was martyred at Carthage in the fourth century. In the midst of the persecution, before he himself was taken, he said of the condition of the persecuted: "These are not chains; they are ornaments. O fettered feet of the blessed ones treading the path to paradise! You have no bed, no place to rest in the mines; your wearied limbs are stretched on the cold earth; naked, there are no clothes to cover you; hungry, no bread to feed you. But what glory lights up your shame."

The Roman Empire could not stop the power of the church in that day. Out of the midst of persecution and death she emerged victorious, until the empire was compelled to recognize her and make Christianity the state religion. The church of Christ was victor through the defeat of bloodshed and suffering.

Then in the Middle Ages she who called herself the church went forth under the protecting arm of the Holy Roman Empire in the name of "Victory." She was clothed in pomp and splendor. Her coffers were filled with wealth. She had influence and power in the courts of kings. Yet how weak she was! She became enmeshed in the entanglements of feudalism, and fell the victim of her own greed, impotent and defeated.

History tells us that when Charlemagne was crowned emperor he became so desirous of making

Victory Through Defeat

the world Christian that he overwhelmed the Saxons with his army and baptized them by force. It is said that the soldiers consented with but one condition, that condition to be made known at their baptism. When they went under the waters they held up their right arms—their fighting-arms! Thus they continued as pagan in practice as before. Perhaps the manner in which “the church” advanced her power in those years is the cause of war and bloodshed in a so-called Christian Europe to-day. When in the name of the church men have gone forth in search of victory for victory’s sake, she has been defeated!

If the church to-day is to be victorious, she must be a suffering, sacrificing church. The church of the ages has come through her baptism of blood; to live now she must continue that baptism, and she must drink the cup of suffering. Her message—in word and deed—must be the message of the cross.

III. *The Christian to-day must find victory in defeat.* The Christian life must be one full of surrender. Christ still says of old: “If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me.” Christ does not call to discipleship the individual who is like the man who would not follow Him because he had no home, or like the rich young ruler who was not willing to sacrifice his possessions. He wants followers who are willing to pay the price of following.

We all like to be noble Christians, heroes before God and men. We are told that after Constantine saw the cross in the sky, he made a great gold cross set with precious stones and placed it in the front ranks of the army as it went into battle. The enemy, upon seeing it

blazing in the sun, fled. We like to be in the front ranks of the army as it carries a jeweled cross against a frightened enemy, but, when a sacrifice is to be made, how few of us are there!

If we want to serve Christ, we will not find Him clothed in sumptuous splendor. He is in the sick-chamber, in the midst of suffering, heartache and want. He is clothed in rags and submerged in poverty. He is in the dark, crowded tenement-house, in the dirt and smoke of the coke-ovens. We will find him where human want cries out. If we would serve Him, we must serve Him there.

We know how to be victors; we know how to abound, but we have not learned how to be abased. We know little about suffering for Christ or being defeated for His cause. I try each day to learn that lesson, and as I try I remember that my Christ is a humble Christ, He is a suffering Christ, a Christ who was ridiculed and defeated by the world. He is a Christ with emaciated face and bleeding hands. I know that if we follow Him we must go the way of the cross. We must feel the pressure of thorns upon our brows and the crunching of nails through our hands and feet. We must go to the world with bleeding hearts. May God help us to lose our lives—that we may know nothing save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. We must make a sacrifice for our Christ! Let us say with Paul: "Howbeit, what things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ. Yea verily, I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may gain Christ."

17,490
MAIN BX 7327 .A1 B4 1930 0
Bethany college sermons.

AUTHOR
TITLE

22615

MAIN BX 7327 .A1 B4 1930
Bethany college sermons.

17,490

22615

